EXPERIENCES OF PLACE AND CHANGE IN RURAL LANDSCAPES: THREE ENGLISH CASE STUDIES

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines how changes to rural places and landscapes are experienced by residents and incorporated into place attachments and identities over time. It does so through exploring findings from seventy-eight qualitative, 'emplaced', oral history interviews in three English villages: Mullion (Cornwall); Askam and Ireleth (Cumbria); and Martham (Norfolk). These villages are located near to at least one existing windfarm, which – as an example of rural change - provides a common focus for the research. The research is informed by a 'middle-ground' theoretical approach that considers discursive and experiential aspects of people-environment relationships and pays particular attention to how engagements with the past are enrolled in shaping experiences of landscape, place and change. Attitudes towards rural place-change are identified as being shaped by four complex, relational facets, viz: i) discursive interpretations of rural place, (post)nature and temporality; ii) experiential factors; iii) assessments of utility; and iv) local contexts. The thesis draws these together into a conceptual framework that helps guide analyses of place-change experiences. The framework's value is demonstrated through applying it to the example of windfarms. The results reveal perceptions to be complex and multifarious but suggest that changes can be incorporated into place attachments and identities so long as highly-valued place assets are not harmed. The research makes a valuable contribution to geography by enhancing understandings about everyday rural lives and experiences; and revealing parallels between academic and lay discourses about landscape, 'nature' and place-temporality. It also adds to the considerable literature on perceptions of renewable energy by providing insights into attitudes towards windfarms at the post-construction, rather than proposal, stage.

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Author's declaration

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research background and rationale

1.1.1 Rural change

Rural areas are constantly undergoing change. In England, since the post-war years in particular, a growing population, agricultural intensification and a rise in the use of the countryside for consumption practices have resulted in increasing demands - not always compatible with each other - being placed on rural areas (Marsden et al., 1993; Woods, 2011). Rural areas are also recognised as having particular needs due to their peripheral location outside of the principal social and economic centres – as recognised in UK government policy (UK Government, 2013b). A growing elderly population, poor access to public transport and low wages (often coupled with high house prices) are among the issues that need to be addressed, whilst also protecting and enhancing the local and global environment. Efforts to meet these social, economic and environmental demands have both social and material effects on the countryside. Social transformations include changes to rural populations and demographics, which can alter the community dynamics and everyday lives of rural residents (Cloke et al., 1995a; Mahon, 2007; Panelli, 2001). These intertwine with material impacts such as the addition of business and housing developments, waste disposal facilities and energy infrastructure to landscapes otherwise considered 'natural'.

These multiple demands and transformations on rural space inevitably have political implications (Woods, 2006) and lead to various contestations. Rural protests about diverse issues such as fox-hunting (Milbourne, 2003), agricultural policy and fuel prices (Reed, 2008) and recreational access (Woods, 2003a) are commonplace in the UK and have been extensively explored within rural studies. In terms of physical change, the

politics of development have been thoroughly investigated - for instance with regard to new windfarms (Woods, 2003b), housing developments (Murdoch & Marsden, 1994) and waste disposal sites (Ferreira & Gallagher, 2010). We now, therefore, have a broad understanding about how potential changes to rural landscapes are perceived and contested by the people who live there.

However, much less is known regarding how these changes are debated and interpreted 'after the event' – i.e. when opposition has either been absent or failed and the change has been implemented. For instance, how does material change impact on the lives and experiences of individuals and communities and to what extent do controversies and negative perceptions rumble on or fade into the background of everyday life? What are the factors that make some changes more/less contested and more easily 'accepted' by some people than others? More attention has been given in the literature to experiences of the social dimension of rural change (see Cloke et al., 1995a; Day, 1998; Mahon, 2007; Panelli, 2001), but the interconnections between physical and social transformations to place remain under-scrutinised. How, for example, might the now-transformed material features of place become incorporated into community practices and a collective sense of place?

Such questions are important because if we can understand how changes are adjusted to over time, and why some are more easily accepted than others (and by some people more than others), then we can begin to think more effectively about facilitating change in a way which is more harmonious and amenable to sustaining or enhancing existing place-related identities. An improved understanding about such processes thus holds promise for informing an approach to managing rural change that is conducive to enabling economic development whilst also protecting the countryside and the interests of rural communities – a core goal of UK government rural policy (UK Government, 2013a).

1.1.2 Temporalities of place and landscape

At the core of these issues lies the importance that place has to humans as a marker of identity and the effect that change has upon this process. As a central element of the geographic discipline, the concept of place has received much attention over the years. Agnew's (1987) definition of place as composing of location, locale and sense of place is a generally accepted one, and it is the sense of place aspect of this – the emotional and affective bonds that people create with places – that has been given most thought. Although not always positive (Hummon, 1992; Lewicka, 2011b; Manzo, 2003; 2005), these bonds have been argued to be central in the development of personal identity and a sense of self, as people define themselves in part according to the places in which they have spent time (Entrikin, 1991; Malpas, 1999; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). This leads to people forming strong attachments to particular places. It is unsurprising, therefore, that prospective or actual change can stimulate passionate resistance among those who treasure a place, particularly if that change threatens the key meanings or symbols associated with it (Stedman, 2002) (though change can of course also be positive (see Devine-Wright, 2011b; Manzo, 2013)).

Whilst there is general consensus around the importance of place, the way in which a place is conceptualised has been widely debated within human geography. Much of this debate arises from ontological disagreements about whether the world is directly experienced in phenomenological terms, or filtered through the lenses of social construction. As explained further in Chapter Two, these differing viewpoints have resulted in varying emphases being placed on embodied and experiential (e.g. Carolan, 2008; Edensor, 2008b; Seamon, 1980), or socially-constructed and discursive (e.g. Halfacree, 1993; Harvey, 1996; Short, 1991) ways of knowing place (see Cresswell, 2004, for an overview). The notion of landscape has been the subject of similar, if not greater, debate in these regards (see Wylie, 2007, for an overview) and is closely intertwined with the concept of place, particularly in the rural context.

Landscape is, therefore, also attended to in some detail in this thesis. The intention is not to get embroiled in the ontology of these debates but, following the likes of Bender (2001), Cloke (2003), Halfacree (2006a), Murdoch (2003) and Olwig (2008), to show how both experiential and discursive elements combine in the way in which people relate to the world around us. Both are, thus, important to understanding people-place relationships.

Since change is an inherently temporal concept, understanding how place-change is perceived and experienced requires considering how relationships with place and landscape are themselves temporally based. Indeed, the past history of a locality – 'how it used to be' – is central to a sense of place and much work has focused on how memory and history are enrolled in this (Jones, 2011; Jones & Garde-Hansen, 2012; Lewicka, 2008; Malpas, 1999; Massey, 1995; Setten, 2005; Tolia‐Kelly, 2013). This also raises the question of how the temporality of place is (broadly) perceived. As Pred (1984) and Massey (1994) (among others) argue, some interpretations of place present it as a fixed and bounded entity which has a sense of rootedness, stability and permanence, but conceiving of a place in this way risks obscuring processes of change and 'fixing' it in a particular time. In the rural context, this has relevance to notions of a 'rural idyll', where popular images of the countryside present it as a traditional and timeless entity (Bunce, 2003; Murdoch, 2006; Woods, 2011). However, geographers increasingly conform to the view that place is a relational concept – that is, a nexus in a complex network of flows, processes and social interactions, which only has meaning in reference to other nodes in the network. Such a view highlights the continually changing and evolving nature of places. As Massey (1994, p.155) puts it; "if places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are processes".

Part of understanding responses to change must, therefore, involve an engagement with how the temporality of place is perceived and how transformations are interpreted within the wider context of place-history and place-change. Although temporal understandings of place have been widely discussed within the literature, particularly regarding the role of memory and heritage practices, these have generally not been explicitly applied to a consideration of how processes of change are experienced. Furthermore, whilst this literature includes a focus on both personal and collective processes and practices of engaging with a place's past, the ways in which these are knitted together and dialectically related have been less explored (Jones & Garde-Hansen, 2012).

With the points discussed here in mind, this thesis seeks to explore how change is (or is not) incorporated into experiences and perceptions of place over time through foregrounding the temporal aspects of people-place relationships and exploring perceptions of change in three English villages. The research begins from a broad platform, approaching 'change' in a general sense in order to explore residents' own evaluations of the relative extent and importance of different types of place-change. This sets the wider context for understanding how different types of change are experienced and evaluated. However, in order to provide a focus to the amorphous concept of 'change', windfarms have been selected as an example of physical change within the countryside to explore in more detail, for the reasons discussed in 1.1.4.

1.1.3 'Nature' and heritage in rural landscapes

In rural areas, attachment to place is particularly bound up with notions of 'nature', landscape and community. In Western thought, Cartesian epistemology posits 'nature' as the binary opposite to 'culture'. It also parallels the nature-culture binary with that of rural-urban, whereby rurality comes to be equated with nature and urbanity with culture (DuPuis, 2006). The ontological reality of such a binary has been increasingly

challenged by relational thinkers who question the validity of conceptually separating humans from the non-human world in this way (Haraway, 1988; Ingold, 2000; Latour, 1993; Whatmore, 2002). This has led to the emergence of what have been termed 'post-natural' approaches, in which humans, non-humans and inanimate objects are seen non-hierarchically as relational entities in a network of flows and processes that all act upon each other in complex and unpredictable ways (Anderson, 2009; Castree, 2005). Ideas such as hybridity (Whatmore, 2002), actor-network theory (Latour, 2005; Law, 1992), non-representational theory (Thrift, 2008), dwelling (Ingold, 2000) and new ecology (Zimmerer, 1994) are all examples of post-natural perspectives, as each refute the idea of humans being separate from, and hierarchically acting upon, an external system. They instead view them as having always been entwined in the wider assemblage of networked relations (Castree, 2005). Some geographers have advocated terms such as 'socionature' (Anderson, 2009; Swyngedouw, 1999) and 'natureculture' (Latimer & Miele, 2013) as more appropriate for describing the hybrid entities emerging from the interconnections between human and non-human processes. Strictly speaking, concepts such as socionature and hybridity are themselves flawed, as they imply a bolting-together of the two categories (nature and culture), which post-natural perspectives deny (Anderson, 2009). However, in the absence of a more suitable descriptor, the term 'socionature' will be used in this thesis to refer to such ideas.

Whilst this thesis recognises and concurs with a post-natural ontology, I also acknowledge that 'nature' still holds meaning in popular usage and understanding and that Cartesian notions of a nature-culture binary continue to "animate thought and action in myriad everyday sites and situations" (Castree & Braun, 2006, p.161). It is, therefore, important to consider the ways in which ideas about, and experiences of, 'nature' are implicated in perceptions and experiences of rural place, temporality and change. This matter is particularly relevant when considering changes that involve the introduction of non-'natural' structures, such as windfarms, into landscapes valued by

many for their ‘natural’ qualities. It might be assumed that since such changes clash with representations of a bucolic idyll, they will be interpreted as a threat to rural identity and be resisted or disliked for this reason. Indeed, much of the literature on public attitudes to windfarms has found aesthetic dislike based on a clash with landscape values to be an important factor in shaping opposition (see 1.1.4). However, such an explanation may oversimplify the issue, as rural identities are multiple and people hold differing priorities about the use and value of the countryside (Cloke, 2003; Halfacree, 2007; Marsden et al., 1993; Woods, 2011). It also implicitly assumes that all non-‘natural’ structures are considered antagonistic to rural identities and will be opposed – an assumption which this thesis refutes. A more nuanced exploration into the role of discursive ideas about, and valuations of, ‘nature’ in (temporal) conceptualisations of rural place and landscape is, therefore, required.

Although a Cartesian nature-culture binary can be said to prevail in popular understanding, the extent to which alternative notions of socionature may also be recognised by those outside of academic debates is unclear. The literature around post-nature has so far tended to focus on developing the concept philosophically (e.g. Whatmore, 2002), demonstrating its validity and implications through the use of specific examples of hybridity, cyborgs and actor-networks (e.g. Cloke & Jones, 2001; Haraway, 1991; Murdoch, 2003; Swyngedouw, 2006), or applying its principles to new approaches to environmentalism and conservation (see Krauss, 2013), rather than evaluating the extent to which such ideas chime with, or are acknowledged within, lay understandings. This is important in relation to this thesis because understanding how interactions between ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ are interpreted and given meaning by rural residents may help shed light on the ways in which human-made objects such as windfarms are perceived.

It is also interesting that whilst some new structures are opposed in rural landscapes due to (in part) their industrial or ‘urban’ form, older objects can come to be seen as

part of the ‘natural’ landscape, and even as important markers of cultural heritage and place identity (Knight & Harrison, 2013). For instance, the prominent ‘golf-balls’ (nicknamed for their shape) housing Britain’s Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdale, Yorkshire were protested against when first constructed in 1962, but subsequently became a popular tourist attraction and “when they were taken down [in 1982] there was, ironically, almost as much uproar and protest calling for their retention as part of the landscape – they had won the hearts of the nation” (Whitworth, 2013, no page number). Another example of industrial structures being celebrated as symbols of regional identity and heritage is the Cornwall and West Devon Mining landscape, where remnants of a high-impact extractive industry are now viewed as attractive and important enough to be protected by UNESCO World Heritage status (Laviolette & Baird, 2011; Orange, 2008). There is clearly a temporal aspect to this, as the process through which objects are labelled as ‘heritage’ and incorporated into notions of the ‘natural’ landscape is distinctly time-wrought. ‘Heritage’ itself is a culturally situated term, the meaning of which is constantly changing (Harvey, 2001). But how does this process operate, and why do some things come to be seen as heritage and not others? Ideas about ‘nature’ and heritage play key roles in processes of rural place identity and thus demand attention within this thesis.

1.1.4 Windfarms as place-change

Windfarms are an interesting and illustrative example of rural change for a number of reasons. First, they are a prominently visible example of physical, non-‘natural’ change within the UK countryside and are becoming increasingly common due to efforts to reduce carbon emissions and meet the UK’s obligations under the European Commission’s Renewable Energy Directive (2009), which aims to achieve 15% of the country’s energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020. Yet windfarms are well-known for causing controversy at the local (and wider) scale and, therefore, represent a material change which (at least at the time of project proposal) is deemed

significant by rural residents. They are thus worthy of attention when considering how changes are incorporated into conceptualisations of place once established. This is particularly so since the strong, often powerfully emotive responses that windfarm proposals can trigger have been shown to be closely linked to processes of place identity and place attachment (Devine-Wright, 2009; Haggett, 2011), which lie at the heart of understanding wider experiences of rural change and instances of rural contestation.

Second, the debates surrounding windfarms tap into complex environmental issues and discourses that are particularly interesting in the rural context given that they provoke clashes between groups with differing local and global environmental priorities, which have been characterised as "green-on-green" debates (Warren et al., 2005). Windfarms can also be perceived to be particularly antagonistic to rural identity due to their association with technology and society rather than 'nature' (Brittan, 2001). On the other hand, their presence highlights questions about the validity of such divisions and alternative conceptualisations of a hybrid, relational, networked and evolving 'socionature' (Anderson, 2009; Swyngedouw, 1999). Engaging with these debates from a post-event perspective thus provides an opportunity to gain insights into how ideas about the environment and non-human world interact with perceptions of rural place, temporality and change.

Finally, exploring attitudes to windfarms post-construction makes a valuable contribution to the renewable energy literature in terms of understanding the longer-term effects that windfarms have upon people's lives, experiences of rural landscapes and processes of place identity and attachment. The extensive literature around public attitudes towards renewable energy projects, and windfarms in particular, has contributed much to our knowledge around the factors that influence opposition and support at the planning stage. Landscape values and place attachment (which are particularly relevant to this thesis) are among the factors that have been identified as

important (e.g. Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Haggett, 2011; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 1994; 2007a). However, with a few exceptions (e.g. Devine-Wright, 2005; Eltham et al., 2008; Wolsink, 1989), this literature has focused on responses to potential change in the form of windfarms or other renewable energy projects, rather than on how actual projects are perceived once they have been in place for some time. This may be partly due to an implicit bias that directs such research towards identifying barriers to renewable energy implementation with the aim of increasing installation (Ellis et al., 2007). Such a focus neglects the longer-term impacts that windfarms may or may not have upon the communities near which they are sited – communities which are often rural due to the greater availability of the necessary space and wind resources required for their construction. Understanding how windfarms affect processes of place attachment, and how they are accommodated as part of place over time, also holds promise for identifying ways in which future projects may be designed to minimise disruption to the place-based identities and everyday lives of rural residents.

1.2 Research aims

Following from the research background and rationale described above, the overarching research aim can be summarised as:

> ***To explore the role of temporality in relationships with place and landscape and understand how rural place-change is experienced and adjusted to over time***

This aim will be addressed through a focus on three case study villages in England, which are all located in rural areas and lie in close proximity to at least one existing windfarm. The overall aim will be fulfilled through an investigation of the following research questions:

1. How is the past enrolled in individual and collective relationships with rural place and responses to change?

2. How are discursive ideas about 'nature' and heritage enrolled into processes of rural place identity and perceptions of non-'natural' structures in the landscape?

3. How are existing windfarms, as examples of recent material change in rural landscapes, perceived, made sense of and incorporated into processes of place identity and attachment?

As the above research context and questions indicate, this thesis involves engaging with a number of key themes that are of interest to geographers. These include the temporal aspect of people-place relationships (with particular attention to individual and collective memory and notions of history and heritage); landscape; rurality; socionature; and attitudes to windfarms (including associated environmental discourses and debates). A more comprehensive description of the thesis' structure, and the themes that each chapter explores, is provided below.

1.3 Structure of thesis

The key themes of the thesis are investigated in more detail in Chapters Two and Three, with reference to the relevant academic literature. Chapter Two establishes the level of existing knowledge regarding rurality, place attachment and attitudes to non-'natural' structures in rural areas and identifies areas where further understanding is needed. Chapter Three provides further context for the study through exploring geographical debates about place, landscape and temporality. It also introduces the theoretical approach taken within the thesis.

Chapter Four introduces the case studies upon which the thesis is based. These are: Mullion in Cornwall; Askam and Ireleth in Cumbria; and Martham in Norfolk – all relatively large villages in rural areas with at least one windfarm nearby. Following an explanation of the reasons for using a case study approach, and for selecting the three particular villages, each one is described. These descriptions provide an overview of

the social, economic, environmental and historical contexts of each village, which are essential for framing and interpreting the insights that emerge from the research.

The methodology and techniques used within the research are presented in Chapter Five. This includes i) a consideration of the oral-history and emplaced-interview methods that were identified as most appropriate for meeting the research questions; ii) an introduction to the specific procedures used in the study; and iii) an explanation of how the data were analysed. The ethical issues and limitations associated with the research, and efforts taken to mitigate these, are also considered.

Chapter Six begins the discussion of the empirical material by exploring the significance of place, landscape and 'nature' for rural residents' place-based identity and wellbeing. This sets the context for the following chapters, but it also highlights notions of time, change and stasis in perceptions of place. The experiential and discursive elements of place, and the interrelationships between the two, are unpicked with particular attention to their temporal elements. I foreground perceptions of stability and permanence, as well as flux and transience, in residents' notions of place, revealing discursive representations and personal experiences regarding the temporality of landscape and 'nature' to be key components of relationships with rural place.

Chapter Seven turns from considering residents' engagements with the material elements of a place's character and past, to the question of how shared meanings, social interactions and valuations of community and heritage are also enrolled in rural place identities. Each case study village is focused on in turn to discuss these themes and demonstrate their implications for perceptions of both social and physical change. The findings highlight 'community' to be an especially important facet of rural place identity and thus changes (both material and social) that impact on this element of place emerge as of particular concern to residents. Local history practices and

community traditions are revealed to be important ways of establishing or maintaining links with the 'roots' of a place and, thus, of reasserting place-based identities. In the context of place-change, such practices might be interpreted as efforts that seek to preserve a state of fixity. Here, however, I suggest that they can function as aids in the process of adapting to change by protecting the most valued aspects of place identity and maintaining a sense of continuity through times of instability. For many residents, change is seen as essential to ensuring that the place continues to 'live' and thrive.

Chapter Eight extends the discussions about perceptions of 'nature', heritage and the temporality of place that were introduced in Chapters Six and Seven. Here, I draw out participants' attitudes to established non-'natural' structures in the landscape and consider how these alter over time. The discussion focuses on opinions of three landscape features (Mullion Harbour, Askam's mining remnants and Goonhilly Earth Station) but also touches on how windfarms were discussed and understood by participants in relation to these older non-'natural' structures. Concepts of 'nature', heritage, technology and aesthetic beauty – which are important elements of rural place identity – emerge as fluid and dynamic, changing over time according to particular social contexts.

In Chapter Nine, the thesis' findings thus far are drawn together into a conceptual framework. This representational device is designed to enhance understanding about the processes that shape attitudes to rural place-change by making the various factors involved analytically identifiable. Four dialectically-related and politically-infused dimensions are identified as particularly influential. These are: i) discursive interpretations of rural place, (post)nature and temporality; ii) experiential factors; iii) assessments of utility; and iv) local contexts.

Having explored residents' general perceptions of temporality and change in rural places, Chapter Ten turns to a focus on attitudes towards existing windfarms as an

example of a relatively recent, material change. The research found that, whilst a few people actively objected to the presence of their local windfarm and a few positively celebrated it, for many it has become an unremarkable feature that has been incorporated into the fabric of place and background of everyday life. The conceptual device introduced in Chapter Nine is used to explore and explain the various opinions and debates that emerged from participants' accounts, demonstrating how perceptions of existing windfarms are shaped by a complex combination of discursive interpretations, experiential factors and pragmatic assessments. Local contexts and the specificity of place emerge as particularly important in shaping the ways in which these factors are brought together to determine perceptions of existing windfarms.

In the concluding chapter, I summarise the findings and draw together the insights discussed in the preceding chapters. In particular, I consider the relative importance placed on social and material changes by participants and the implications of this for understanding temporal processes of place attachment and identity. I also explain how the research questions have been addressed and discuss the implications of the findings for managing rural change in the future. Finally, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the research are evaluated and future research opportunities and requirements are identified.

Chapter 2. Contextualising rural change

2.1 Introduction

This thesis draws together a wide variety of geographical literature on the themes of place, landscape, rurality, nature and renewable energy to explore the complexities of how place and change are experienced in a specifically rural context. Chapters Two and Three together review key strands of this literature in order to position the research in relation to current knowledge and identify under-scrutinised areas.

In this chapter, I provide further detail on the research rationale introduced in Chapter One by contextualising the study within existing understandings of rural change, including attitudes towards windfarms and other non-'natural' structures. The following chapter will then explore the theoretical themes regarding place, landscape and temporality, which inform the thesis' approach to analysing experiences of rural place and change.

I begin by exploring how 'the rural' is variously produced, given meaning and experienced within a UK context. This includes considering processes of rural change and contestation, as well as the role of landscape and 'community' in the formation of rural identities. Next, recent theoretical perspectives on rurality, which inform the relational and 'middle-ground' (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992) approach taken within this thesis, are discussed. Section 2.3 then reviews how responses to change – particularly Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs) – have been explained through theories of place attachment. Since these explanations have been particularly applied to the subject of windfarms, this sets out the necessary background behind the final discussions in this chapter. Hence, 2.4 synthesises the key literature concerning attitudes towards windfarms and other non-'natural' structures, focusing particularly on work exploring

the impact of change on place attachment and/or the role of discursive ideas about 'nature' and rurality in shaping opinions.

2.2 Rurality

2.2.1 Contested and changing rural space

Rural change has been extensively scrutinised within rural geography. Issues such as agricultural intensification, changing land uses, social and economic reconfiguration and contestations over physical developments in the countryside have long been of concern to the sub-discipline (Cloke & Thrift, 1990; Ilbery, 1998; Marsden et al., 1993; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994; Woods, 2011). This literature recognises that these changes have significant consequences for what it feels like to live in rural areas (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992). For instance, Cloke et al.'s (1994) *Lifestyles in Rural England* project, which attempted to bring qualitative evidence from interviews with local people into the traditionally positivist arena of policy-making, included consideration of how people felt about social re-composition arising from increased urban-rural migration (see Cloke et al., 1995a, in particular). Others, such as Day (1998) and Liepins (now writing as Panelli) (2000a; 2000b; Panelli, 2001), have also considered the effect of rural change on social relations and discursive meanings associated with the countryside (see 2.2.3). Such work has demonstrated how social changes in particular have led to increasing friction between groups and altered power structures and political processes within rural communities.

Another stream of research into rural protest has investigated contestations arising from policy and physical changes in the countryside, from fox-hunting to windfarms, and has concluded that contestation arises from clashes between multiple rural identities (Reed, 2008; Woods, 2003b; Woods et al., 2012). Landscape and 'nature' are central to the formation of place-based identities in rural areas (Duncan & Duncan,

2004; Matless, 1998). People may describe themselves as ‘country people’ (in contrast to the ‘other’ of city people or ‘townies’) and define themselves according to ‘country’ ways of life. However, rural communities are usually home to a number of different, co-existing identities which attach differing meanings to place and landscape, and this can lead to conflict. As Woods (2006, p.593) explains, “‘rural identity’ has become a key rallying point for political activists as they seek to defend and promote the countryside, as they imagine it”. Many rural contestations can thus be described as debates over how the countryside should, or should not, change.

Elsewhere in the literature, studies of LULUs such as energy and waste infrastructure also have relevance to understanding material rural change, as these infrastructures are often located in rural areas. Many such studies account for opposition to physical change through the theory of disruption to place attachment (see 2.3 and 2.4.1), but these are usually centred around environmental debates and not necessarily contextualised with reference to the rural geography literature.

These various strands of research have helped shed light on how different elements of countryside change are perceived by rural residents. However, the ways in which the physical and social aspects of rural change may interact to shape place-experience remain less clear. Additionally, since studies of physical changes in the countryside have usually focused on opposition to contentious developments at their proposal or implementation stage, we know little about how rural residents perceive and adjust to (relatively) abrupt changes ‘after the event’, or to more gradual and/or cumulative changes. Research that considers how changes – both broad and specific – are experienced by individuals on an everyday basis, therefore, has the potential to contribute to improved knowledges about the complexities and dynamics of rural living.

Finally, there is often an implicit assumption that significant change to social systems or environments generally results in a psychological resistance to that change, although

this will depend on the extent to which the change is perceived as negative (Watson, 1971). Much effort is now put on 'managing change', particularly within businesses and institutional organisations, with 'resistance to change' forming a focus of much occupational psychology literature (e.g. Oreg, 2006). In the rural context, residents (particularly urban migrants seeking the 'rural idyll') are often thought of as being resistant to changes that alter the countryside – as epitomised by organisations such as the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) (Bell, 1994; Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Short, 1991; Woods, 2005b). Local history societies and heritage-focused tourist attractions could also be accused of resisting change by working to preserve particular historical images of place (see 3.4.1). However, there appears to be a lack of attention given to establishing the extent to which this is the case. Clearly, the perceived positivity/negativity of changes will vary according to context, the individuals, and the assessment of alternatives, but more research is needed to determine the various ways in which presumed 'negative' changes are, in reality, interpreted.

2.2.2 The discursive rural

The concept of 'the rural' is a complex one and its definition has been subject to wide debate within rural geography (Halfacree, 1993). Since 'the cultural turn', rurality has generally been described as a social construct – or, as Woods (2011, p.9) puts it, "an imagined entity that is brought into being by particular discourses of rurality that are produced, reproduced and contested by academics, the media, policy-makers, rural lobby groups and ordinary individuals". The dominant construct (at least in the British context) is that of a 'rural idyll' in which the countryside offers a cleaner, healthier and more community-centred way of life than the dirt, noise and stress of cities. The rural landscape is, to an extent, expected to conform to an (imagined) ideal, involving rolling agricultural pastures and 'natural' features such as valleys, trees and rivers, interspersed by traditional, picturesque villages with a 'community feel' (Bunce, 2003; Cloke, 1994; Matless, 1994; Woods, 2011). The rural is thereby presented as 'opposite'

to the urban and aligned with particular ideas about nature (as discussed further in 3.3.1).

Ideas of what is rural have also long been shaped by media. Images of a bucolic idyll have been abundant in literature, poetry and art since the eighteenth century, but these ideas are now widely reinforced and reproduced by television and the mass media. Bunce (2003, p.15) argues that the continued persistence of this idyll image is due to "a profound and universal human need for connection with land, nature and community" and describes the rural idyll as "a psychology which, as people have come increasingly separated from these experiences, reflects the literal meaning of nostalgia; the sense of loss of home, of homesickness". The presence of the 'rural idyll' within the media helps to perpetuate this notion of an idealised countryside, although alternative representations that better reflect the heterogeneity, challenges and contestations of the countryside are also now becoming more widespread. The BBC programme *Countryfile*, for instance, covers a range of rural issues and political debates that address the more negative aspects of rural living, alongside the positive.

The increasing use of the countryside for recreation and tourism and the prevalence of beliefs about its aesthetic qualities and health benefits (both physical and psychological) has led to commentators emphasising the countryside's role as a site of consumption - in contrast to its more traditional role as a site of production based on primary industries such as fishing, farming, forestry and mining (Marsden, 1999). However, we should not neglect the presence of alternative discourses and the heterogeneity of the post-productivist countryside (Halfacree, 2007; Marsden et al., 1993). The presence of productivist outlooks continue among many rural dwellers, particularly those who are involved in working the land (Vergunst, 2012; Wilson, 2001; Woods, 2003b). Other discourses may alternatively present the rural as (for example) a site for 'backwards' cultural practices and beliefs or as wild, isolated and uncultured, or utilise it as a space for practising 'green', anti-capitalist lifestyles (Halfacree, 2007).

Mainstream images of rural space also tend to obscure the presence of rural 'others' and neglect issues of poverty, homelessness, racism and marginalisation (Cloke et al., 1995b; Cloke et al., 2000; Halfacree, 1996; Holloway, 2003b; Little, 1999; Milbourne, 1997). Thus, although hegemonic versions of rurality may appear relatively stable, the 'rural idyll' represents only one among many understandings. A single rural community is usually home to a number of different, co-existing identities, again contributing to contested landscapes attributed with different meanings.

Rural space is not only represented; it is also performed through the practices that people carry out during their everyday lives (Halfacree, 2006a; Woods, 2011; Yarwood, 2012; Yarwood & Charlton, 2009). These include traditional practices, such as hunting, angling, shooting and folk singing, as well as everyday practices and social interactions, such as using the local shop, drinking in the pub or 'hanging out' in the park (Liepins, 2000a). This process of performance, in part, inscribes representations into the material countryside and forms an essential part of their reproduction. As Woods (2011, p.229) explains, "the performances of people in the countryside, both residents and visitors, turn discursive representations into practice, and become ways of structuring life in the countryside. The routinized performance of everyday practices naturalizes discourses of rurality and the social relations contained therein". Social relations and concepts of 'community' are key to many of these performances of rural identity.

2.2.3 Rural community

Central to 'idyllic' conceptions of rurality is the idea that the countryside is home to communities of people who know and support each other. This concept of community aligns with Tönnies' distinction between *Gemeinschaft* as a (typically rural) social grouping based on mutual bonds and a sense of togetherness and *Gesellschaft,* or society, as a wider imaginary social structure. Clearly, as has been widely discussed in

the literature, this *Gemeinschaft* concept of 'community' is an idealised notion that conceals the many divisions and frictions that exist within place-based groupings of social relations (Valentine, 2001; Young, 1986). There has also been wide acknowledgment that communities are not always based on material places and face-to-face social relations but can be imagined entities – mental constructs - based on shared interests or values between people who may never interact (Anderson, 1983). They can also exist as 'communities without propinquity' (Webber, 1963), as, for example, in the case of virtual communities which connect at a distance via the internet. Yet the traditional, idealised notion of a place-based community continues to influence cultural meanings associated with the countryside. It also continues to be held up by politicians as a desirable social grouping that increases grassroots cooperation and social sustainability. Recent government initiatives such as 'Localism' and 'The Big Society', for example, rely on idealised notions of community to justify political decentralisation and institutionalise neoliberalism through what Herbert (2005) has referred to as the 'trapdoor of community'.

The politicised and exclusionary nature of 'community' and its influence on experiences of rural living has been extensively explored, as bound up in perceptions of place and community are implicit ideas about who does and does not 'belong'. Rural 'communities' (and the 'idyll' construct) can be particularly exclusionary and isolating by exacerbating lines of difference between majority and minority groups (e.g. travellers (Halfacree, 1996), homosexuals (Bell & Valentine, 1995) and ethnic minorities (Cloke, 2006b)). Additionally, lifelong inhabitants of rural areas are often thought of as being 'locals' or 'country people' who have an 'authentic' link to, or claim over, the place in contrast to 'city people' who move there from elsewhere (Woods, 2011). Such notions raise a host of issues around community cohesion and inclusion/exclusion and can, in some instances, contribute to divisions (or at least distinctions) between newcomers and 'locals' within communities (Bell, 1994; Liepins, 2000a). These divisions have, in part, been classified as class-related conflicts arising from the migration of urban

middle-classes to rural areas (Bell, 1994; Cloke & Goodwin, 1992; Murdoch, 1995; Phillips, 1993), though Cloke and Thrift (1987; 1990) point out that class-based groupings are themselves heterogeneous and intra-class conflict can shape rural relations as much as inter-class conflict.

Day (1998), whilst recognising such divisions within rural communities, argues that the distinctions and boundaries between social groups are subtle and flexible, allowing them to be redrawn according to particular contexts as the social composition of rural areas change. Divisions between 'outsiders' and 'locals' may well exist, but these are shifting concepts and the multiple networks of social relations that make up each individual's understanding of the community are generally open and adaptable enough to incorporate such 'strangers' over time. The fine and permeable gradations between different social groupings mean that the boundaries of community and belonging are constantly redefined. This highlights the presence of not a single unit of 'community' but a 'community of communities' that is more accommodating of difference than critical accounts might suggest. Day does not deny the exclusionary tendencies of community, but he draws out its ambiguous, flexible nature and, following Cloke et al. (1997), stresses the "plurality of identities subject to negotiation and interaction within particular local settings" (Day, 1998, p.251).

Whilst few would deny the presence of alternative forms of community and the issues discussed above, place-based 'community' remains an important notion to rural identity and represents one of the attractions of rural living (Liepins, 2000a; 2000b). It is, therefore, frequently reproduced and reiterated by rural residents through spatial, representational and performative means. For instance, Liepins (now writing as Panelli) has emphasised the various ways in which community is practised as a key part of place identity in small settlements in Australia and New Zealand (Liepins, 2000a; see also Panelli, 2001). She explains how regular social activities, such as visits to the Post Office and participation in sports clubs, and staged events, such as Australia Day

concerts and annual flower shows, all “contribute socially and materially to a sense of ‘community'. The organisation of, and participation in, such events demonstrate people's capacity for, and interest in, gathering together” (Liepins, 2000a, p.334). These performances form one aspect of Liepins/Panelli’s framework for reading ‘community’, which acknowledges “that both territorial and imagined ‘communities' do not exist in a vacuum, but rather occur within specific [biophysical, social, economic and political] contexts which must be considered” (Liepins, 2000a, p.326). In addition to community practices, the framework also includes the material spaces and structures in which a community is imagined and enacted, the cultural and local meanings associated with it, and the people who interact to create it.

Given the importance of ‘community’ to constructions and performances of rural identity, considering the meanings that the concept holds is essential to any exploration of rural residents’ relationships with place. As discussed above, previous work within rural studies has provided a wealth of insights into the implications of rural restructuring on social relations and the complexities of, and issues associated with, notions of rural ‘community’. However, there is value in expanding on such studies, and on Liepins/Panelli’s work on the production and experience of ‘community’ in particular, to consider in more detail how the concept is manifested in the everyday lives and perceptions of rural residents. Additionally, there has been some suggestion within the place attachment literature that, for long-term residents of a place, social relations may be more significant predictors of place attachment than the physical qualities of the place and landscape (see 2.3), but the relative significance of, and interactions between, these two aspects has not been explored in much depth within rural studies. There is, therefore, a need for research that unpacks how rural residents perceive, value and reproduce a ‘sense of community’ in relation to the place and landscape within which it is contextualised. Such an investigation will allow a fuller understanding of the importance of different aspects of rural place in residents’ everyday experiences

and of the implications of this for rural politics and actions to resist or initiate particular changes.

2.2.4 Theoretical plurality and relational rurals

Partly in response to calls for 'theoretical plurality' (Murdoch, 2003) and 'middle-ground' approaches (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992), recent analyses of rural space have emphasised the networked, relational and hybrid nature of the countryside and its politics (Bell et al., 2010; Evans & Yarwood, 2000; Heley & Jones, 2012; Murdoch, 2000; 2006; Woods, 2007; 2011; Yarwood & Charlton, 2009). Informed by wider theorisations on place and landscape (see 3.2), these primarily seek to provide more holistic explanations of rural space by viewing it as a complex network of relational entities and processes and by considering the material and performative, as well as discursive and representational, elements of its production.

Halfacree's (2006a; 2007) three-fold model of rural space - developed from Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) theory of the production of space - has, in particular, been widely used as a method of analysing the dialectically-related representations, locality and everyday lives of place (and the interplay between them) in a rural context (Rye & Gunnerud Berg, 2011; Woods, 2011; Yarwood, 2012; Yarwood & Charlton, 2009). Halfacree (2006a) argues that rural space needs a contextual approach which recognises that its true substance is more than the sum of its parts. Incorporating the representational, performative and material aspects of rurality, his model conceives rurality as consisting of the following three elements:

- *Rural localities* inscribed through relatively distinctive spatial practices. These practices may be linked to either production or consumption activities;
- *Formal representations of the rural,* such as those expressed by capitalist interests, bureaucrats or politicians. Crucially, these representations refer to the way the rural is framed within the (capitalist) production process; specifically, how the rural is commodified in exchange value terms. Procedures of signification and legitimation are vital here;

- *Everyday lives of the rural*, which are inevitably incoherent and fractured. These incorporate individual and social elements ('culture') in their cognitive interpretation and negotiation. Formal representations of the rural strive to dominate these experiences, as they will rural localities

(Halfacree, 2006a, p.51).

These elements do not exist in isolation but are dialectically related and constantly overlapping, interweaving and contradicting one another. Tensions and contradictions between and within the elements allow room for alternative interpretations of rural space to emerge and be played out, which may conflict with dominant narratives. Issues of power and conflict are also present within each element.

Halfacree's model has been used by Yarwood (2012) to demonstrate how the practices of a mountain rescue team on Dartmoor engage members with a familiar space in new affective ways, which in turn work to reinforce ideas about Dartmoor and the 'wild' outdoors. Similarly, Rye and Berg (2011) build on the model to explore how conceptions of Norwegian rurality influence, and are influenced by, the growth of second-homes in Norway. Halfacree's model thus offers effective possibilities for considering political issues alongside more cultural or performative concerns - something experiential accounts of place and landscape have been criticised for neglecting (see 3.2.2). Whilst Halfacree's model is not explicitly used within this thesis due to my emphasis on the experience, rather than production, of rural space, its recognition of the complex, dialectical interplay between the materiality, representation and lived experience of rural space is reflected in the theoretical stance taken (see 3.5).

In the rural context, where the concept of rurality is closely associated with that of 'nature', the way in which relational thinking treats ideas about nature and culture is particularly relevant. Popular ideas about rurality, perpetuated by social representations, tend to equate the concept with 'nature' and, consequently, the

countryside is often described as a ‘natural landscape’. However, relational and experiential approaches have highlighted alternative ways of viewing the world that challenge such Cartesian divisions between objective and subjective, material and discursive experiences (see 3.2.2). The emphasis of a relational approach on networked and dialectical relationships in the formation of place disrupts the binaries of rural and urban, nature and culture by highlighting the interrelatedness of all nodes in the network, be they human or non-human. Whatmore (2002) argues that, since humans are biological entities that are part of the natural world, and since we have always affected, and been affected by, the non-human world, we cannot sensibly define things as either wholly natural or wholly social. Castree (2005) explains how such thinking has led to the development of what has been termed ‘post-natural’ thinking, in which the world is not seen as either natural or cultural but as composed of hybrid or ‘socionatural’ (Swyngedouw, 1999) forms. However, as noted in Chapter One, even these terms have been challenged as implying a ‘bolting-together’ of nature and culture, rather than treating the concepts as meaninglessness and obsolete, as would a strictly post-natural ontology (Anderson, 2009).

These problems aside, post-natural approaches open up possibilities for thinking differently about the countryside. The idea of hybridity has been developed within rural geography to recognise the interplay between humans and non-humans in the construction and performance of rural space (Cloke, 2006a; Halfacree, 2006a; Woods, 2011; Yarwood & Charlton, 2009). For instance, Murdoch (2003) uses the example of the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak in rural UK to explain how human interventions regarding animal feed and transportation ultimately allowed the conditions for the outbreak of the disease, which from other perspectives may have been deemed ‘natural’. In hybridity terms, the countryside is, therefore, seen as “*co-constructed* by humans and non-humans, bound together by complex interrelationships” (Murdoch, 2003, p.264, original emphasis). Rurality cannot be seen as a purely social

construction because the countryside is hybrid in character. It is part nature, part culture.

Strictly speaking, this 'post-rural' (Heley & Jones, 2012; Murdoch & Pratt, 1993) perspective makes a focus on *rural* landscapes a misnomer, as the rural cannot be distinguished from the urban due to their interrelatedness. However, since 'rural' is a commonly used and understood term in lay discourse, an analysis of its meanings continues to be valid (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992; Halfacree, 1993). There are also real differences between the lived experiences of 'rural' and 'urban' dwellers and between the character and politics of the city and the countryside (or, more accurately and in recognition of the heterogeneity of rural space, *countrysides* (Bell et al., 2010; Murdoch et al., 2003)). A relational approach does not deny differences between rural and urban, but it does demand recognition of the dialectical relationship between the two. In thinking about processes of socially-driven physical change in the countryside (especially changes that may be construed as 'urban' or 'industrial', such as windfarms and housing developments), the extent to which rural residents conceptualise the countryside as 'natural' or hybrid may have important implications for how such change is perceived (see 3.3).

Geographers in the 1990s called for greater attention to lay discourses of rurality and how they interact with academic and professional discourses. Halfacree (1993), for instance, highlights how academic attempts to define the rural are underpinned by common-sense understandings, but do not always acknowledge this. He also stresses the need to examine people's own accounts of their everyday lives in order to understand the real effects that representations have in/on localities and to appreciate the ongoing (trans)formation of the social world. Jones (1995) also criticises academic approaches to rurality for underplaying the multifariousness of lay discourses and calls for greater recognition of their spatial and conceptual complexities and incoherencies. These pleas are still valid today, as few recent studies have sought to unravel people's

perceptions about the nature of rural places and landscapes. How do theories relating to the representation, production and experience of rural place align with how people outside of the academic arena actually perceive and describe the world around them? I argue that such questions are important because understanding the way in which places (and their temporality in particular) are conceptualised by the people who live within them can help shed light on perceptions of, and processes of adjustment to, place-based change in rural areas.

2.3 Place attachment and resistance to change

As Chapter Three will discuss in more detail, the concept of place has been described as being fundamental to the human condition due to its centrality in people-environment relations and role in the formation of personal identities (Malpas, 1999; Tuan, 1977). It is, therefore, unsurprising that place-based change can engender heated contestations, such as those outlined in 2.2.1. The nature of people-place relationships, and their implications for understanding responses to change, has also been considered by other disciplines, particularly environmental psychology. I review some of these accounts here (alongside geographical work) because they have been particularly influential in explaining attitudes towards non-'natural' structures through the lens of 'place attachment' (see 2.4).

The term 'place attachment' is commonly used to refer to the emotional bonds that people have with particular places. These bonds are developed through the meanings that people attribute (both individually and collectively) to a place and are said to be integral to the construction of personal identity (Lewicka, 2011b; Low & Altman, 1992; Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). This attachment to place (particularly place-of-residence) is based on both social factors, such as the presence of strong familial or convivial ties with other residents, and physical factors, such as

appreciations of beautiful landscapes or valued buildings (Brehm et al., 2006; Lewicka, 2011a; 2011b; Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

The concept of place attachment can be a useful way of viewing people-place relationships. However, unless used with care, the term can oversimplify these processes. For instance, the term 'attachment' implies a positive relationship but people may alternatively associate places with negative perceptions and emotions such as fear, isolation, dirtiness or repression (Manzo, 2005). In terms of place of residence, many people will indeed positively associate with the place where they live. However, others will have negative perceptions of it but be restrained from moving elsewhere for various reasons. Others still may be ambivalent or undecided about the place.

In recognition of these issues, Hummon (1992) developed a typology for defining different types of place attachment, which included both positive descriptors ('rootedness: ideological' and 'rootedness: taken-for-granted') and more ambivalent and negative categories ('place alienation', 'place relativity' and 'uncommitted placelessness'). More recently, Lewicka (2011a) re-worked this typology to provide further detail and nuance. As shown in Table 2.1, Lewicka's typology identifies a variety of attitudes, both positive and negative, and describes the typical characteristics that define these.

Whilst this typology goes some way to acknowledging the subtleties present in different forms of place attachment, it still lacks (as any typology will) a full recognition of the ways in which the specificities of place influence people's perception of, and relationship with, it. As Massey (1994) demonstrated in her seminal text, '*A global sense of place',* there are an infinite number of ways in which the different networks, flows and processes that create places mingle and emerge (see 3.2.1). The particular histories and socio-cultural contexts of places, together with people's personal

memories and experiences of them, are highly specific and will influence the 'sense of place' in numerous ways. As discussed further in Chapter Three, there is, therefore, a need for studies dealing with place attachment to consider the discursive, experiential and locally-specific forces that influence these relationships.

Table 2.1: Types of place attachment and their characteristics (compiled from Lewicka (2011b)

Attachment type	Typical characteristics
Traditional attachment	- Close ties with family, friends and neighbours - Deeply attached with strong place identity - Low mobility (rootedness in place) - May take residence place for granted - Attachment is family-inherited or based on personal tradition - Most conservative and least open to change
Active attachment	- Close ties with family, friends and neighbours - Deeply attached with strong place identity - Relatively low mobility (rootedness in place) - Self-conscious decision to live in the place - Active interest in place's goings-on
Alienation	- Dislike and estrangement from place - Low place identity - Place of residence not actively decided upon by choice
Place-relativity	- Ambivalent or conditionally accepting attitude towards place - Local identity lower than for positive attachments but higher than for placelessness
Placelessness	- Place indifference - No need to create emotional bonds with places - Low local identity but higher national identity

The strength of attachment to a place is often thought to increase with the time spent there (Brown & Perkins, 1992; Hay, 1998), though recent studies tend to challenge the simplicity of such a conclusion, highlighting the complex and nuanced nature of people-place relationships and suggesting that it may be the type – rather than intensity – of attachment that alters. For instance, in his study of place attachment among visitors to the Jackson Hole area in Wyoming, Smaldone (2006) found that, whilst people were initially attracted to the place's physical qualities, for repeat visitors, the emotional and social meanings they associated it with became more significant over time. Similarly, residents who are new to a place may be more likely to base their attachment on its physical features than longer-term residents, whose time-deepened social ties may provide a more important source of attachment (Hummon, 1992).

The above argument does not necessarily mean that the physical attributes of a place are unimportant for longer-term residents. In a study of rural communities in the western U.S., Brehm et al. (2006) found that, whilst the strength of social attachment to a community did increase with residence length, the strength of attachment to the natural environment did not differ significantly between newcomers and long-term residents. Furthermore, it may be that physical aspects are simply more taken for granted as familiarity with the place increases (Relph, 1976). This is particularly so since the physical aspects of place and landscape may be perceived as more stable than social aspects (Crouch & Matless, 1996). They, therefore, to some extent fade into the background of mundane life, whereas social aspects can be more explicitly dynamic and are played out on an everyday basis. This generally un-reflexive relationship with the setting of a familiar place might be aligned with the phenomenological concept of 'natural attitude', which Seamon (1980, p.149) describes as "the unnoticed and unquestioned acceptance of the things and experiences of daily living". Immersed in this 'natural attitude' people participate in what Seamon calls 'place ballets' - the individual, routine movements that collectively contribute to a sense of place - without conscious reference to the materiality of the place in which they occur.

Whether based more on physical or social attachment, emotional bonds with place can be an important aspect of identity. This theory has been used to explain resistance to change, both in terms of individual relocation and changes that alter the experience or 'sense' of a particular place (which I refer to here as place-based change). Brown and Perkins (1992) argue that relocation can be a psychologically distressing process because it disrupts the stability and continuity provided by place in the turbulent creation of a sense of self (although relocation can also be positive if it means escaping from a place with negative associations (Devine-Wright, 2013b)). Similar processes may occur in response to place-based change if changes are perceived as threating the stability and/or treasured features of a place (Brown & Perkins, 1992; Mihaylov & Perkins, 2013). This has been widely used in recent years to explain opposition to

windfarms and other LULUs such as nuclear power stations (Parkhill et al., 2010), hydropower developments (Vorkinn & Riese, 2001), high-voltage power lines (Devine-Wright, 2013a) and waste-disposal facilities (Wester-Herber, 2004). The introduction of such new structures into an area is argued to disrupt the meanings that people associate with that place, thereby posing a threat to place identity and prompting place-protective actions. These explanations are explored further in 2.4.1 below.

2.4 Attitudes towards windfarms and other non-'natural' structures

This thesis examines a range of rural changes, as it is, in part, interested in inductively identifying the types of changes that are most significant to rural residents. However, focusing on windfarms as an example of recent - but now established - change enables a more focused analysis to be undertaken and provides an opportunity for exploring whether/how non-'natural' structures might be accommodated into perceptions of rural landscapes and processes of place identity (see 1.1.4). In this section, I provide a brief overview of the existing literature on attitudes towards windfarms and other non-'natural' structures, particularly that exploring the influence of place and perceptions of 'nature' and rurality. This shows how the literature informs the research, but it also suggests that this thesis offers a valuable contribution by providing greater insights into relationships between place identity and attitudes towards existing – rather than imminent – non-'natural' structures.

There is a wealth of literature across a variety of disciplines examining public attitudes towards various energy infrastructures, and windfarms in particular (e.g. Bell et al., 2005; Cass & Walker, 2009; Devine-Wright, 2005; Haggett, 2011; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 2010). High-profile public controversies over the siting of windfarms have made them the focus of much research. Until the mid-2000s, much thinking around public perceptions of renewable energy relied on notions of NIMBY (Not In My Back

Yard)-ism (e.g. Dear, 1992; Short, 2002) to explain the 'social gap' (Bell et al., 2005) between general public support for renewable energy and opposition to the installation of sites at the local level. The NIMBY explanation centres on the assumption that local support for windfarms increases with distance – i.e. those living closest to developments are most opposed to them. This explanation carries negative connotations regarding selfishness and has been used pejoratively to discredit oppositional arguments (Wolsink, 2007a). However, the NIMBY concept has since been widely discredited (e.g. Bell et al., 2005; Devine-Wright, 2005; Haggett & Toke, 2006; Wolsink, 1994) and its fundamental premises questioned. For example, distance from turbines has been shown not to be an issue in determining attitudes, with some studies even finding an 'inverse-NIMBY syndrome' where support actually decreases with distance from turbines (Devine-Wright & Devine-Wright, 2009; Musall & Kuik, 2011; Warren et al., 2005).

In critiquing NIMBYist assumptions, there has been increasing recognition of the wider range of factors influencing communities' and individuals' reactions to proposals for windfarms in their area. These include the physical aspects of the turbines, landscape type, trust in policy and developers, public participation, social networks, and place and identity processes (Devine-Wright, 2005). West et al (2010) show that broader environmental worldviews may also play a role in forming attitudes towards renewable energy, although this research focused on general attitudes so it is unclear to what extent such worldviews may also influence attitudes towards specific local projects. It should be noted that despite the challenge to NIMBYist assumptions in the literature, the concept still exists among policymakers and in the press, where it can be used as a powerful device for undermining oppositional voices (Devine-Wright, 2011a; van der Horst, 2007).

2.4.1 Energy infrastructure as disruptive to place attachments?

Over the last decade there has been increasing recognition of the role of place attachment in shaping residents' responses to planning proposals for new windfarms (Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Haggett, 2011) (and other energy infrastructure, e.g. Bailey et al., 2011; McLachlan, 2009; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). Given that visual impacts on the landscape are often a key concern for opponents (Toke et al., 2008; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 1994; 2007b), this observation aligns with findings from elsewhere that stress the importance of landscape in constructions of place and identity (Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Massey, 2005; Matless, 1998). As discussed above, disruption to place attachment from the introduction of wind turbines into a valued landscape can thus pose a threat to identity. As Righter puts it, "familiarity with a place generates attachment, and indeed love, of that landscape. With love comes a sense of stewardship and a determination to protect the land as it is. Wind turbines can be anathema to that purpose" (Righter, 2002, p.37).

In their study of offshore wind in North Wales, Devine-Wright and Howes (2010) showed how place attachment can play a strong role in influencing the opinions of local residents towards a proposed development. Opposition to the windfarm was greater in Llandudno (a town with a successful tourist economy that was thought of as 'beautiful') than in Colwyn Bay (which was considered 'rundown'). The authors explain the difference in opinion between these towns in terms of levels of place attachment. In Llandudno, participants displayed greater levels of place attachment and, thus, the proposed windfarm presented a threat to place identity. These participants were more likely to agree that the development would 'fence in the bay', 'damage tourism' and 'industrialise the view' than Colwyn Bay participants and were less likely to agree with positive statements such as that the windfarm would help to tackle climate change. The authors reframe opposition to the windfarm as place-protective action, rather than NIMBYism, as the NIMBY argument is not able to account for the differences between

opinions in the two towns. An explanation of opposition as place-protective action avoids pinning a pejorative label onto opponents and instead highlights the significance of place meanings and interpretations of change in shaping perceptions. By avoiding presumptive judgements, the multiple project-specific factors that influence opinions are more able to emerge.

It is also important to recognise the nuances, complexities and contextual specificities involved in place attachment (Devine-Wright, 2009; 2013a). Theories about place attachment generally associate longer lengths of residence with a stronger sense of attachment and protectiveness (see 2.3). This implies that - if opposition arises from disruption to place attachment - lifelong residents will be most likely to resist changes such as windfarms. Yet there appears to be little evidence supporting this. Such an explanation also (rightly or wrongly) contradicts suggestions in the rural literature that newcomers to a place are more likely to resist changes that might be considered 'urban', since these are perceived to conflict with a particular image of rurality that they seek (Bell, 1994; Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Short, 2002; Woods, 2003b). Furthermore, protecting a loved place does not necessarily result in resisting change. Since different people will value different aspects of the place, they may make rational decisions about accepting certain changes if it means sustaining other aspects of place that are held most dear. As Devine-Wright (2009, p.434) argues, "whether place attachment necessarily leads to negative evaluations of place change is contingent upon the form and intensity of attachment, as well as the interpretation of change".

2.4.2 'Societal' objects in a 'natural' landscape: Windfarms as 'out of place'

Ideas about windfarms interweave with those about environment (Woods, 2003b), landscape (Wolsink, 2007a) and nature (Brittan, 2001), as well as place. In the UK, both proponents and objectors to proposed rural windfarm sites draw upon a number of wider arguments about 'the environment' to support their positions, revealing tensions

between local and global concerns and differences in environmental values (Warren et al., 2005; Woods, 2003b). For instance, those in favour of windfarms often allude to the global environmental benefits of renewable energy in combating climate change, whilst objectors might draw attention to the risks to the local environment (including dangers for bird and bat species) from wind turbines and the need to protect the countryside from 'industrial' intrusions.

These arguments derive from particular conceptions of the countryside as entwined with environment and 'nature'. From a constructivist viewpoint, opposition to windfarms and other artificial structures can be explained by relating these debates to socio-cultural ideas about the 'rural idyll' and the high value traditionally placed upon the aesthetic landscape (see 2.2.2). In accordance with Cartesian-style divisions, 'nature' and 'rurality' are to be conserved as things of beauty, but societal structures such as wind turbines are generally considered to be aesthetically displeasing and antithetical to the countryside as a space to 'escape' from urbanity, society and industrialism (Brittan, 2001; Park & Selman, 2011; Pasqualetti, 2001; Short, 2002; Woods, 2003b). Brittan (2001, p.169), for instance, suggests that, as artificial, modern and 'unnatural' structures, wind turbines "are difficult to integrate into the biotic community; at least in certain respects, they are like weeds". They can thus be perceived as a kind of pollution, as matter-out-of-place (Douglas, 1984). In other words, they do not align with rural discourses that associate the countryside with 'nature' and bucolic idyll.

Devine-Wright uses Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 1999) to explore these ideas in relation to the explanation of opposition to energy infrastructures as place-protective action (Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright & Batel, 2013). He suggests that a development may be particularly opposed if it conflicts with the symbolic meanings associated with the place. For instance, Devine-Wright and Howes' (2010) study of a proposed off-shore windfarm (discussed above) found that objections in Llandudno were linked to perceptions of the turbines as 'industrial' and as conflicting with the

'naturalness' of the place. Devine-Wright and Batel's (2013) study of attitudes towards high-voltage pylons, which explored people's preferences for pylon design, also provides some support for this explanation. They found that the perceived visual 'fit' of the pylon design with the rural landscape was critical to its acceptability (though the likelihood of any design being perceived to 'fit' was also influenced by other factors such as trust in the electricity distribution company and attitudes towards high-voltage power lines more generally). Similarly, based on data from a number of studies, Wolsink (2007b) concluded that cultural landscape values and preferences for landscape preservation were highly influential in determining attitudes towards windfarms.

The aforementioned studies have elicited interesting and valuable findings, but they perhaps obscure alternative versions of rural identity, which are less based on images of a rural idyll and may be more compatible with positive views of such non-'natural structures'. In a study of windfarm developments in mid-Wales, Woods (2003b) found that, whilst opponents appeared to subscribe to an 'idyll' version of rural identity, some supporters displayed a more productivist interpretation of rurality that was more able to accommodate windfarms (see also 2.4.4). For objectors:

> "the land's value lies not in its productive activity, but as an escape for city dwellers, as somewhere to reconnect with nature, and to inspire art, literature and music. In contrast, subscribers to the discourse of the productive countryside understand the same territory as farmland, grazing or forestry, and cannot imagine why the visual impact of the wind turbines should be objectionable, because they do not use the space in that way"
>
> (Woods, 2003b, p.285).

Objections to windfarms in rural landscapes may also be fuelled less by clashes between windfarms and images of rurality and more by the fact that developers are usually outsiders, based in urban areas far from the rural sites that host windfarms. Opposition is often related more to feelings of exclusion from the decision-making process and a distrust of developers than to a dislike of the turbines *per se* (Wolsink,

2000). Additionally, the uneven spatial distribution of renewable energy can lead to a sense that windfarms are being imposed on rural areas, which are forced to bear the negative impacts of energy generation for the sake of the whole nation (and energy-demanding urban areas in particular) (Pasqualetti, 2000). Windfarm proposals can thereby inflame pre-existing rural-urban tensions (Pasqualetti et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2005).

2.4.3 Energy infrastructure and positive associations with place

The media attention given to windfarm debates can lead to the impression that windfarms are usually opposed by local people. As Warren et al. (2005, p.872) argue, "the press, it seems, gives disproportionate emphasis to the vocal minority that opposes wind power while ignoring the silent, contented (and less newsworthy) majority". Academic studies may unintentionally reaffirm this impression by focusing on reasons for opposition to windfarms, rather than considering more positive or ambivalent standpoints (Ellis et al., 2007).

However, there is evidence that energy infrastructures, in some instances, might be positively associated with place rather than perceived as a threat to it. In a study of two existing sites in southeast Germany, Musall and Kuik (2011) found that, in the right circumstances, windfarms can be perceived as positive additions to place. In Nossen, where the nearby windfarm is commercially-owned, opinions were generally negative. However, residents in Zschradaß, which is host to a community-owned windfarm, were consistently more positive. Here, the windfarm elicited a sense of pride, as it was evaluated as symbolising the community's 'green' credentials and forward-looking nature. This illustrates that attitudes towards windfarms should not be assumed to be negatively based on perceptions of visual incongruence. The community ownership of the windfarm was, however, an important factor in facilitating Zschradaß residents'

positive attitudes, highlighting the importance of considering a multitude of factors when seeking to understand opinions.

Similarly, in a study of a tidal energy project in Strangford Loch, Northern Ireland, Devine-Wright (2011b) found that, for some community members, the technology enhanced positive place-related meanings by increasing the place's sense of vitality and distinctiveness. The technology was perceived to visually 'fit' with the area's tidal narrows because its resemblance to a lighthouse helped maintain continuity with the place's existing character. In this case, place attachment emerged as a positive indicator of acceptance (rather than opposition), with the project coming to be positively associated with how people saw their place.

The perception of Strangford Loch's tidal energy technology as 'fitting' with its surroundings is perhaps unsurprising due to its similarity to a lighthouse and relatively unimposing form. However, even overtly industrial structures with typically negative associations can, over time, come to be an accepted part of rural landscapes. Parkhill et al. (2010, p.46) found that, in the case of those living near to nuclear power stations in the UK, there was an "emphasis placed by interviewees on the materiality of the nuclear power station fading into the background". The power station took on a sense of familiarity or ordinariness, since it was seen every day and, for younger generations, had always been a part of the place. For some, it was also thought to represent 'home', as it was a conspicuous landmark that signalled the return from a journey away.

2.4.4 Windfarms as congruent in a hybrid countryside?: A relational perspective

The idea that non-'natural' structures such as those discussed above might be perceived as 'fitting-in' with a place opens up possibilities for thinking about windfarms as congruent – and not just conflicting – with rural landscapes, and these possibilities are further facilitated within a relational conceptualisation of place. From a relational

perspective, windfarm sites need not be viewed as jarring with 'natural' landscapes but, alternatively, as just one element of a fluid and hybrid countryside, which is continuously being re-shaped by human and non-human processes. As Short (2002, p.52) argues, the presence of wind turbines in the countryside "is in reality only another step in a series of ongoing evolutionary changes of a working countryside supporting human existence".

Vergunst et al.'s (2009) findings from their study of attitudes to a windfarm on the Isle of Skye indicate that a more relational perspective of windfarms might indeed be found among some supporters (see also Woods 2003). Vergunst et al. describe how the crofters on Skye, who were generally supportive of the windfarm, did not see the landscape as being primarily about scenery. Rather, landscape "relates to work, heritage, social relationships and land tenure" (Vergunst et al., 2009, p.152) and helps to create ties between identity, land and community. It is thus a product of social and historical processes, including the crofters' current and ongoing agricultural practices, but is anything but static: "To crofters the land is historical and changing, it is fundamentally created through the activities of human labour through the generations" (Vergunst et al., 2009, p.151). The windfarm is simply part of this process. Opponents of the windfarm, conversely, conveyed attitudes more in keeping with a representational view of landscape. They tended to "articulate a sense of the land as 'untouched by human activity', unspoilt and natural" and used this "as a basis for opposing the development of the windfarm, while allowing for the consumption of landscape as scenery through lifestyle choice and tourism" (Vergunst et al., 2009, p.152).

Vergunst et al.'s (2009) observations suggest that focusing on windfarms as an example of rural place/landscape change, as this thesis does, holds promise as a mechanism for exploring the ways in which landscape and place (and their temporality)

are conceptualised and understood by those living there. This may have useful implications for thinking about how to manage future change in rural areas.

2.4.5 Do attitudes change over time?

Within a disruption-to-place framework, it is understandable that relatively abrupt changes (such as the introduction of a windfarm) within what is perceived as a 'stable' rural landscape may be resisted when they are proposed. But what happens once that proposed change has happened? Whilst the evidence supporting the suggestion that the prospect of a new windfarm disrupts place attachment is convincing (e.g. Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Haggett, 2011), fewer studies have explored the effect of windfarms on place identity and attachment once the turbines are in place.

There has, however, been some work considering how opinions to windfarms and other energy technologies might change over time. Studies such as Wolsink (1989), Eltham et al. (2008) and Warren et al. (2005) have found that positive attitudes increase through time and with proximity to windfarms. For instance, Eltham et al.'s (2008) study in St. Newlyn East, Cornwall (near to the Carland Cross windfarm) used quantitative surveys to compare residents' attitudes to those reported when the windfarm was proposed fourteen years previously (the longest period for a study of this type). Their findings revealed that residents experienced some negative impacts - specifically visual and noise intrusion – to be less than they had expected. The proportion of the population who perceived the windfarm to be visually attractive had also increased from six percent to forty percent.

Warren et al. (2005) likewise found that local attitudes towards the Dun Law windfarm in the Scottish Borders became more positive once the reality of a windfarm was experienced. As they explain, "retrospective questioning designed to elicit pre-

construction and post-construction attitudes…revealed that attitudes remained unchanged for sixty-five percent of respondents. Of the twenty-four percent of people who altered their attitudes following experience of the windfarm, all but one became more positive, the single case of negative change arising from a perception that the windfarm is an eyesore" (Warren et al., 2005, p.863).

On the other hand, other studies have revealed large variations in post-construction opinions between different windfarm sites, with negative perceptions even increasing in some cases (Bishop & Proctor, 1994; Groth & Vogt, 2014; cited in Krohn & Damborg, 1999). Haggett (2011) argues that familiarity with windfarms can exacerbate opposition to new proposals if fears of negative impacts such as noise have been actualised. Largely, however, it appears that support for energy technologies follows a U-shaped curve, whereby public support for renewable energy in general starts off high, drops with the proposal of specific projects in people's locality and then rises again once the technology is in place (Firestone et al., 2009; Gipe, 1995; Wolsink, 2007b). Additional fluctuations in support during the proposal and construction process may also be seen if new information affects the certainty of perceived risks and rewards (Bailey et al., 2011).

The findings discussed here suggest that there may be some capacity for changes such as windfarms to become incorporated into perceptions of place and processes of place identity over time, but empirical – particularly qualitative - evidence for this remains sparse. Most research looking at post-construction opinions of specific windfarms has been primarily technology-focused, rather than approaching the issue from a place-based perspective. Furthermore, (with some exceptions, e.g. Eltham et al., 2008) most of these studies have investigated attitudes only a few months or years after a windfarm's construction, which – given impressions of temporal stability within rural place (see 3.3.1) – may not allow enough time for place-meanings to be re-evaluated and 'bedded down'. Further research into attitudes towards existing

windfarms will, therefore, contribute to our understanding of how physical, non-'natural' change may be accommodated into conceptualisations of rural place.

2.5 Conclusion

This review has identified two key areas in which understandings about rural place and change could be advanced. First, the discussion about rurality has highlighted the importance of recognising the role of multiple identities in contestations over changing rural spaces. However, whilst some work has considered this in exploring experiences of social change in rural areas, the explicit implications of *rural* identities in shaping attitudes to change has rarely been fully examined when investigating attitudes to physical change. Furthermore, place-based studies of attitudes towards physical changes (such as the building of LULUs) have usually focused on imminent, rather than established, developments. Consequently, we know less about how change is absorbed into individual conceptualisations and embodied experiences of place and landscape over time. Since identifications with rural place frequently entail various ideas about 'nature', tradition and cultural heritage (see also 3.4.1), there is particular value in examining these notions when exploring attitudes towards structures which may be deemed 'unnatural', but which are now relatively familiar sights in the local (rural) landscape. This thesis shall, therefore, address the question of how discursive ideas about 'nature' and heritage are enrolled in processes of rural place identity and perceptions of non-'natural' structures in the landscape (research question 2).

The inquiry into how material change is perceived and accommodated into constructions of place identity and attachment is given focus by the use of windfarms as an example of a relatively recent (but old enough to be familiar) change to rural landscapes. The review of literature on renewable energy established a second knowledge gap that this thesis addresses. Whilst studies of attitudes towards

renewable energy technologies are plentiful, they usually focus on proposed developments and say little about post-construction experiences. There is, therefore, scope for further insight into how windfarms might be incorporated into perceptions of place over time. The rural-place element of this relationship is particularly important, as the limited body of literature that has considered existing (rather than proposed) windfarm sites has generally focused on how the technologies themselves are perceived, rather than their impact on people-place relationships. Research question 3 (*how are existing windfarms, as examples of recent material change in rural landscapes, perceived, made sense of and incorporated into processes of place identity and attachment?*) is thus designed accordingly.

Exploring these questions requires an approach that is able to encompass the multifarious elements enrolled in perceptions and experiences of rural place and responses to place-based change. Concepts of place and landscape have been recognised as integral to these processes, but, as argued in the following chapter, their multiple nuances, complexities and implications for understandings of temporality and change have rarely been holistically drawn together. This thesis thus engages with, and is informed by, a number of theoretical perspectives on place and landscape, through which experiences of rural place-change are examined. These will now be discussed.

Chapter 3. Understanding experiences of rural place-change: Landscape, place and temporality

3.1 Introduction

As confirmed by the discussions in Chapter Two, understanding relationships with rural place and landscape is an integral part of exploring questions about how place-change is experienced by rural residents. However, concepts of place and landscape are not straightforward and, as multi-faceted, complex and contested notions, have been conceptually and empirically examined at length by geographers. This chapter explores the various theoretical perspectives relating to these themes and explains how they inform the approach to issues of rural change taken here.

Section 3.2 begins by providing an overview of the main conceptual debates concerning the nature of place and landscape, and how they are perceived and experienced, before introducing the stance taken within this thesis. This is a broadly relational approach, which incorporates both constructivist and experiential perspectives. The ways in which the temporalities of place and landscape are understood are then examined in 3.3, as these have particular implications for shaping perceptions of change. The concern for understanding perceptions of, and relationships with, place and landscape is then extended in 3.4 to consider the role of the past in creating and maintaining these. Finally, the key elements influencing rural place experience - which have emerged from the discussions in Chapters Two and Three and guide the thesis' subsequent analyses - are brought together in 3.5 in a representational summary.

3.2 Conceptualising place and landscape

'Place' is fundamental to how people locate themselves within, and relate to, surrounding environments (Malpas, 1999; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). It is thus a central concept in human geography and has received much scholarly attention, with conceptualisations of place being widely debated as geographical thinking has developed. As a concept and medium through/with which to engage with the world around us, landscape has also been subject to similar debates. Although place and landscape differ in that 'place' conventionally refers to a specific locale whereas 'landscape' implies a broader, perhaps less easily bounded area (and has particular connotations in the Western context), the two concepts are closely related, as both refer to space with meaning. Creswell (2004) and Wattchow (2013) distinguish between them by describing landscape as something to be viewed from the outside and place as something to be immersed in. Yet this distinction becomes blurred in the context of recent approaches to landscape that emphasise an immersive and iterative relationship between landscape and self (see 3.2.2). Without intending to elide the two, I thus discuss both concepts together here to avoid repetition.

3.2.1 Constructivist perspectives

Constructivist perspectives view place and landscape as socially-constructed concepts that cannot be understood independently of the discursive meanings associated with them. The recognition of place as a social construction partly emerged out of critiques of humanist portrayals of the concept. In attempting to move away from the positivism of spatial-science, early humanist accounts had emphasised the importance of place to human experiences, advocating phenomenological approaches that sought to bring out the rich meanings places have for those who experience them (Buttimer & Seamon, 1980; Entrikin, 1991; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). However, these were criticised for an essentialist, anti-modernist tendency to romanticise the concept and equate it with cosy, uncontested notions of home, community and belonging (Cresswell, 2004).

Critical theorists asserted that the delineation and creation of ‘place’, or even ‘home’, is not always associated with positive meanings, but can be highly politicised, inequitable and exclusionary (Rose, 1993). A social constructivist approach helps to uncover such politics, contending that meanings are attributed to places via complex, historical and ongoing social processes that create multiple discourses and representations about what places are and to whom they ‘belong’ (Harvey, 1996). This tends to present place as a fixed, bounded entity, defined by what is outside of it - by what is ‘other’.

This offers an explanation for the frequent conflict and prejudice that occurs in contestations over particular places (see also 2.2.2). Hegemonic representations of place are not universally accepted but are usually contested and struggled over. As Harvey (1996, p.310) states, “the practical and discursive practices of ‘bounding’ space and creating permanences of particular places is a collective affair within which all sorts of contested administrative, military, and social practices occur”. Power thus plays an important role in the social creation of place, with some actors or institutions having more influence over representations of place than others. These dominant representations can exclude, marginalise or ignore certain groups, and much geographical work has explored this issue, particularly with regards to subjects such as gender (Massey, 1994), class (Cloke & Thrift, 1990; Yarwood, 2010), race (Jackson & Penrose, 1993) and sexuality (Duncan, 1996). From this perspective, the politics of place are crucial to understanding places and how they are perceived.

In the Western context, issues regarding the power and politics of representation have been particularly drawn into focus in discussions around landscape. Before discussing these critical perspectives, I provide an overview of how the landscape tradition has evolved within geography, as current debates about the materiality, symbolism and affect of landscape emerge from this history.

‘Landscape’ is a contested term that has been the subject of much philosophical and geographical writing. Landscape studies in the late-nineteenth, and early-twentieth, centuries were closely tied to theories of environmental determinism, which suggested that the nature of a physical environment and climate strongly influence the characteristics of the people who live there through biological evolution. Environmental determinism has since been widely discredited for its presumptive generalisations that served to justify racism and imperialism. A key critic was Sauer (1963), who, along with other members of the ‘Berkeley School’ of landscape, emphasised the impact of human culture on the material landscape. As Wyle (2007) summarises, for Sauer, landscape i) exists ‘out there’, at a distance from centres of urban civilisation; ii) is a material reality composed of physical forms and objects; iii) is synonymous with the term ‘geography’; and iv) is a distinctly cultural artefact formed by humans through the manipulation and modification of nature.

Later, geographers such as Jackson (1984), Cosgrove (1984), and Daniels (1989), began to emphasise the symbolic (rather than simply material) nature of landscape. UK critical geographers in particular positioned landscape as a representational concept with roots in Renaissance-era artistic practices of landscape painting, notions about national identity, and romanticised ideas of the rural idyll (Cosgrove & Daniels, 1988; Daniels, 1989; Matless, 1994). Landscape was conceptualised as a cultural representation, primarily visual in nature, which can be defined as a “unit of visual space” (Wylie, 2007, p.91). From this perspective, ‘’’landscape’ refers to the shape – the material topography – of a piece of land…We do not live in landscapes - we look at them” (Cresswell, 2004, p.11). Proponents of this ‘landscape as a way of seeing’ approach contended that the representation of landscape is, like that of place, highly political and essentially elitist in nature, as it can disguise processes of repression (Cosgrove & Daniels, 1988). By giving power to the artist or observer, ‘landscape’ has the ability to obscure the realities and oppressions of everyday life and work in the countryside. This is inherent in traditional landscape paintings that depict idyllic scenes

where labourers are portrayed as hard-working but happy and content. Landscape is thus "a 'visual ideology' which obscures not only the forces and relations of production but also more plebeian, less pictorial, experiences of everyday life" (Daniels, 1989, p.206).

Whilst analysing landscape as 'a way of seeing' revealed much about the implicit politics of its representation, this perspective was criticised for dismissing the physicality of the environment itself and neglecting the ways in which we engage with the landscape by other, non-visual, means. As Wylie (2003, p.140) puts it, the 'way of seeing' perspective "elided the *materialities* of landscape" and ignored the embodied, experiential, lived aspects of landscape and practice. Cultural geographers and anthropologists such as Wylie (2003), Rose (2002) and Ingold (2000) have thus advocated approaches that more ably recognise these experiential elements of landscape, though have themselves been criticised for neglecting other (particularly political) aspects enrolled in the concept (see 3.2.2).

Early geographical accounts embedded in the spatial-science tradition treated places simply as locations (e.g. Hartshone, 1939, as discussed in Castree, 2003) and were consequently criticised for their tendency to portray places as neat units with clear boundaries, discernible characters and discrete populations (Castree, 2003; Cresswell, 2004). Similarly, representations of landscapes can construe them as long-standing topographical areas or objects that persist as relatively stable entities through time (Cosgrove, 1984). This is problematic because it obscures the complex and dynamic social and political processes that constantly shape places and landscapes and imbue them with a sense of static-ness. Later explanations thus emphasise the topological, rather than topographical, elements of place, describing places as complex entanglements of social networks and processes that can only be defined in relation to other concepts. This stresses a place's interconnectedness to other places and enrolment in global networks and processes (Pred, 1984).

The portrayal of place as relational, processual and 'progressive' has been notably developed by Massey (1994), who describes place as holding multiple identities, with its meaning varying for different groups and individuals. Place cannot, therefore, be constructed as a single coherent entity with fixed boundaries, defined by a homogenous community. Rather, a place is comprised from a continuous layering of meanings created by the lives, experiences and activities that occur within and between it and other places. Humans and their activities form part of the nexus of flows that make up places, but they are only one element of it; objects and non-humans are also inextricably bound up in this process. A place involves bodies, objects and flows and is "constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus" (Massey, 1994, p.154). For Massey then, places are social constructions, but they are fluid processes, not static, bounded objects.

3.2.2 Experiential perspectives

Whilst the explanation of place as a network of social relations in a constant state of becoming is now widely accepted within the discipline, a continued emphasis on social construction has been challenged as neglecting the experiential elements of place. Cultural geographers in particular have argued that viewing place merely as a set of topological social connections and constructions divests it of its topographical richness (Rose & Wylie, 2006) and ignores our corporeal embodiment in the world. In seeking to explore the more emotive aspects of place and landscape, theorists have returned to phenomenological ideas that focus on the essential human condition - that is, the human as stripped bare of the social and cultural contexts that surround him/her. These ideas, which are principally drawn from the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty, emphasise that consciousness is embodied (Spurling, 1977), highlighting the role of the body, its movements and its senses in our perception and experience of the world. This perspective contends that the mind is not separable from the body and should not

be given primacy in explaining experience, as the world comes to be known not just through a cognitive process filtered by the lenses of social construction but through a direct sensing of it. In Merleau-Ponty's terms, "it is incorrect to speak of bodies as having consciousness. Instead, bodies are consciousness" (Carolan, 2008, p.410). The body is thus placed at the centre of enquiry. From an experiential perspective, then, place/landscape cannot be reduced to a social construction that is only given meaning by discursive processes. Rather, it is more-than-representation (Lorimer, 2005) and should be understood as an embodied relationship with the world.

Carolan (2008) explores this embodied knowledge in a rural context through considering how farmers come to know their land, in part, through a repeated tactile and kinaesthetic engagement with it. For example, one of Carolan's participants talks about how he feels the contours of his fields and the condition of the soil through the seat of his tractor, which he has come to see as a metaphorical extension of his own body. Similarly, Spinney (2006) has demonstrated how cyclists on Mount Ventoux (a famous climb within the cycling fraternity) form their knowledge of the mountain not just through the various cultural meanings associated with it but also through the sensory, bodily, and mobile experience of making the journey up the mountain by bicycle. This (painful) bodily experience is an essential part of the attraction of 'doing' Mount Ventoux and is key to the cyclist's construction of 'knowing' the place. Spinney (2006, p.709) thus contends that, "the conjoining of the person and bike and the resulting embodied rhythms and kinaesthetic sensations of the movement of cycling are constitutive of the character and meanings of particular places".

Other geographers have also explored the ways in which space is experienced through bodily engagements such as walking (Edensor, 2000; Lorimer & Lund, 2008), long-distance running (Lorimer, 2012), and other bodily practices (King & Church, 2013; Simpson, 2009; Yarwood, 2012). In particular, Wylie has used the experience of walking to challenge binary divisions between subject and object and demonstrate the

ways in which landscape and self are entwined. His account of ascending Glastonbury Tor illustrates how cultural meanings associated with a place are not understood in isolation, but emerge and resonate "within the sensuous, embodied context of ascending the Tor" (Wylie, 2002, p.443). Wylie (2005) also uses the example of walking the South West Coast Path to highlight a 'being-in' (rather than a 'looking at') relationship with landscape, in which the practice of walking allows both landscape and self to be understood together as a 'lived milieu'.

Many of these accounts of embodied relationships with landscape connect with the dwelling perspective; an approach to place and landscape that can be described as both relational and experiential. The notion of dwelling, as conceived by Heidegger (2001 [1951]) and influentially re-worked more recently by Ingold (2000), is about how we are enmeshed in the world around us. For Heidegger (2001 [1951], p.74), dwelling (or *dasein*, literally translated from German as 'being here') "is the manner in which mortals are on the earth". It is not limited to the notion of inhabiting forms that we have built for shelter, as non-inhabitable buildings (e.g. bridges, roads and wind turbines) remain within the domain of our dwelling. Thus, places are not 'built' before they are dwelt in, since "to build is in itself already to dwell" (Heidegger, 2001 [1951], p.144). From this perspective, "the forms people build, whether in the imagination or on the ground, arise within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagement with their surroundings" (Ingold, 2000, p.186).

An important element of the dwelling perspective is its post-natural approach (see 2.2.4) to our relationship with non-human beings. By "focusing upon the 'agent-in-its-environment', upon ongoing, relational texts of involvement, the dwelling perspective seeks to deny and dispel the tenets of dualistic thought, the separation of culture from nature, the discursive from the material" (Wylie, 2003, p.143). There can thus be no sensible distinction between nature and culture – between the activities undertaken, or the forms created, by humans and those undertaken by non-humans - as all are related

and enmeshed in the same lifeworld. From this perspective, place becomes not a fixed, bounded entity external from human beings, but an intertwining of activities; a milieu of involvement (Ingold, 2000). Furthermore, “through living in it, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it” (Ingold, 1993, p.154).

Whilst the dwelling perspective has been widely taken up by geographers as a useful way of exploring the interrelationships between humans, non-humans and the environment (e.g. Cloke & Jones, 2001; 2004; Wylie, 2003), it has been criticised for advocating a romanticised, apolitical view of place. The term ‘to dwell’ conjures up idyllic notions of cosy home-making, whilst in reality not all places (and not all homes) are necessarily nice places to be (Rose, 1993). Early humanist engagements with Heidegger’s notion of dwelling used it to emphasise people’s relationship with the world as one of “togetherness, belonging and wholeness” (Seamon, 1993, p.16), portraying the inhabitation of place and landscape as ‘natural’ and ‘authentic’ and “bemoan[ing] the alienating nature of technology in its production of homogenized experiences of place” (Ash & Simpson, 2014, p.8). However, more recent engagements with the dwelling perspective seek to avoid this sort of naturalism and anti-modernism and focus more on exploring the relational ties between human and non-human entities (and their effects). Ingold (2005) contends that accusations of romanticism derive from a poor choice of wording, rather than a fundamental flaw in the perspective itself. He reiterates that the intention of the dwelling perspective is to describe the interconnectedness of the lifeworld, rather than to portray the lifeworld as one of purely comfort and harmony. Dwelling should thus alternatively be “regarded not so much as a cosy, harmonious, place-bound, being-in-the-world together, but more as an intense, uncomfortable, competitive, place-related, becoming-in-the-world-together” (Cloke & Jones, 2004, p.338).

The dwelling perspective’s focus on a phenomenological notion of ‘being-in-the-world’ has also been criticised as liable to neglect the influence of politics and power on

perceptions of place and landscape (e.g. Nash, 2000). In phenomenological terms, another problem with the approach is that of its ontological positioning of the conscious subject. Whilst seeking to move away from Cartesian notions of a subject gazing upon the inert object of landscape, the dwelling perspective's focus on the embodied 'agent in its environment' prevents this goal being entirely achieved. As Wylie (2006, p.521) explains, "although Ingold's account of landscape as the `taskscape' of dwelling does re-immerse the cultural in the natural, and reanimate landscape in terms of embodied practice and performance, the trace of a constituting, perceiving subjectivity remains".

Such criticisms have led to the development of what has been termed a post-phenomenology of landscape, which uses ideas from Deleuze and the later works of Merleau-Ponty (Ash & Simpson, 2014; Rose & Wylie, 2006). A post-phenomenological approach conceives landscape as not merely part of the lifeworld in which the embodied agent is entwined, but as playing an active, iterative role in the relationship between it and the self. It attempts to escape the subject-centredness of previous approaches through its contention that landscape is neither seen nor seeing. Landscape's affective ability to evoke memories, thoughts and emotions related to people and places - past and present, present and absent - entwines with our perception of self and gives it a certain of agency of its own. The landscape can, therefore, be better described as "the entwined materialities and sensibilities *with which* we act and sense" (Wylie, 2005, p.245).

3.2.3 Combining the discursive and experiential

Whilst this thesis does not delve into the complexities of phenomenological and post-phenomenological thought, it does employ some of the insights and understandings of such work to obtain more holistic understandings of how place, change and landscape are experienced. Ideas about the embodied experience of space are used together with those about its discursive production within a broad relational approach to provide

a more nuanced explanation of our relationship with place and landscape that considers both its topological and topographical elements. This allows recognition of the strong roles that discourses and representations play in shaping ideas about rurality (see 2.2.2), whilst also accounting for the affective, sensuous nature of the landscape on perceptions, which are arguably particularly brought out in a countryside or 'natural landscape' setting. Here, I provide the theoretical rationale behind combining experiential and constructivist conceptualisations of place and landscape.

Attempting to combine phenomenological and constructivist perspectives can be viewed as problematic due to their divergent ontologies. Where constructivist perspectives regard place and landscape as always mediated through the lens of social construction, phenomenological perspectives emphasise the world as directly experienced and co-constitutive with sense of self (Rose & Wylie, 2006; Wylie, 2007). Whilst recognising such tensions, this thesis does not intend to get embroiled in the complexities of these debates. Rather, the approach I take is that experiential and discursive understandings both play a role in influencing perceptions of, and relationships with, place and landscape. I maintain that reflecting on experiential engagements with place does not preclude also considering the political implications of discourse. Indeed, as Holloway (2003a, p.164) argues, discursive productions and embodied experiences are very much interrelated:

> "embodiment, or being a body, is the basis, the existential possibility, for having thoughts, forming representations, exchanging symbolic codes, and so on … it is not just having a body or being in a body that forms the ground for cognitive thought to develop, it is the body's action *in and towards* the world that allows representational knowledge to exist".

From this perspective, corporeal knowledge contributes to the particular ways in which representational knowledge is continuously created and experienced – and vice versa. Embodied memories, movements and practices are to some extent determined by social influences. Even the size and fitness of our bodies can be shaped by the pressure of social norms and rules that influence which foods to eat and which

activities to perform. Bodies may be the vehicles through which individuals come to know the world, but they continually evolve and change shape (both literally and metaphorically). Subjective emotions, memories and perceptions, whilst seemingly instinctive and apolitical, are inevitably affected to some extent by social and political influences that filter into consciousness over the course of lives, shaping the way individuals think about and react to the world. Conversely, representations associated with place are ultimately a product of human engagement with it – they are "borne of the performativity of living" (Crouch, 2010, p.13). The relationship between representations of place and lived experiences of it is, therefore, a dialectical one (Halfacree, 2006a; Harvey, 1996; Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]; Merrifield, 1993).

Considering both experiential and socially constructed elements of place and landscape is not about simply 'bridging the gap' between the objective and subjective, the material and the lived. Merrifield (1993, p.519) argues that attempting to do so falls into the trap of binary thinking by assuming "a duality between the material (external) world and the (internal) world of human consciousness" and thereby depicting the whole as a sum of its parts. Rather, the different elements of place should be seen as dialectically related 'moments' within a unified whole (Harvey, 1996; Merrifield, 1993). Thus, although I refer to discursive and experiential elements of place throughout this thesis for analytical ease, these should not be seen as independent notions adjoining each other, but as co-existing through a dialectical relationship.

3.3 Temporality in conceptualisations of place and landscape

3.3.1 Temporal fixity in representations of rural place

The way in which place and landscape are conceptualised has implications for how their temporality is understood. The social constructivist assertion that a place's identity is primarily constructed from its social and historical context tends to bind place with a

certain temporal fixity, as the feeling of historical or time-centred rootedness becomes integral to creating a sense of authenticity (Pred, 1984). This can 'fix' a place in time and attribute it with a sense of timelessness, thereby naturalising 'traditional' features and practices (Setten, 2004) and leaving perceptions of it vulnerable to being threatened by change.

This issue is exacerbated within the discourse of the rural idyll, which presents rural place as a seemingly traditional, 'natural' and therefore timeless and unchanging image (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992; Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Short, 1991). Conservation practices can act to reiterate this timeless image by 'museumising' idyllic features of the bucolic English countryside (Riley & Harvey, 2005), whilst the tourism and heritage industries do the same by celebrating distinctive elements of a place's past and reproducing historic scenes and environments. Thus, in a quest for authenticity, "the effort to evoke a sense of place and of the past is now often deliberate and conscious" (Harvey, 1996, p.302). Such attempts can be so far detached from their original meaningful form that they become simulacra – staged spectacles of rurality (Cloke, 1997).

Perceptions of rural temporality are also influenced by Cartesian associations between rurality and 'nature'. 'Nature' is usually perceived to be 'good' (Setten, 2004) and "the alignment of rurality with nature has produced moral geographies in which the countryside is held to be purer, nobler and more treasured than the city" (Woods, 2005a, p.11) (at least in hegemonic views). Although the countryside has long been shaped by human activity, its perceived 'natural' qualities thus form part of its attraction and are enrolled in the construction of many rural identities (Bell, 1994; Castree & Braun, 2006; Woods, 2011). This contributes to the inherent temporal fixity of the rural idyll image because 'nature' can also be depicted as ahistorical and timeless (Coates, 2005; Vergunst, 2012). Within some environmental discourses, nature is conceived as

a pre-formed entity that is separate from, and in need of protection by, humans. As Vergunst (2012, p.176, c.f. Coates, 2005) explains:

> "Nature presented through Christian theology narrates episodes in which nature is formed or made in the past, the Garden of Eden, and then remade in the Flood. Here nature is understood as made and then finished, and what we may find now is a kind of record of that episode of making. Preservationist discourses may often be predicated on this idea of nature completed, in which change is a diminution of the resource of nature. Nature therefore has not just a spatialising quality but also a powerful inherent temporality. If land is not just spatially outside the realm of culture but also temporally in stasis or without history, what are the prospects for change and progression in the present and future or indeed awareness of change in the past?"

Since nature is commonly equated with rurality (Murdoch & Lowe, 2003), both concepts are presented as fixed and stable, leaving little room for change. In contrast, however, the breakdown of nature-culture and rural-urban binaries within relational accounts (see 2.2.4) serves to dispel notions of place as static, as humans are reconceptualised as inextricably and non-hierarchically interwoven into the networked fabric of the world, which is in a constant process of movement and change. As I discuss further below, relational perspectives may thus offer more possibilities for conceptually adjusting to material transformations in the landscape, regardless of whether or not change is principally driven by humans or by forces conventionally thought of as 'natural'.

3.3.2 Temporal fluidity: Place as process

Recent theories of place and landscape approach their temporality somewhat differently to the timeless representations discussed above. Ingold (1993, p.157) explains that time should not be viewed as a sequence of discrete events linked together chronologically, but as a "pattern of retentions from the past and protentions for the future… temporality and historicity are not opposed but rather merge in the experience of those who, in their activities, carry forward the process of social life". Hence, in thinking about the temporality of a landscape or place, its historical past

cannot be imagined as a series of isolated images. Rather, its temporal nature is one of process and evolution, in which happenings merge seamlessly into one another. Place and landscape are now thus commonly understood within human geography as being in an incessant state of becoming (Pred, 1984). As I explore below, this reveals them to be in a continuous state of evolution and change and emphasises their practiced, 'lived' and 'storied' nature (Brace & Geoghegan, 2011; DeSilvey, 2012).

The processual nature of place and landscape has been highlighted by Bender (1993; 2001; 2002), who writes that, "landscapes, like time, never stand still" (2002, p.103). She uses the example of Stonehenge to trace the multiple temporalities of landscape, demonstrating that the meanings associated with the site are fluid, having been politicised and contested throughout its history. Once a Neolithic site of ritual and burial, in the Medieval era Stonehenge was imbued with pagan magic and spirituality in the eyes of commoners, but physically appropriated by the Church and symbolically re-worked as a site of the devil. Today, the site continues to hold multiple and competing meanings as a visitor attraction, icon of national heritage, symbol of Arthurian mythology, and spiritual site. The landscape is thus not static or bound by a definitive meaning; it is constantly being physically and symbolically shaped and contested by social and political forces (Bender, 1993).

Massey has similarly emphasised processes of 'becoming' throughout her writings on space and place. In two related pieces (Massey, 2006; 2005), she traces the geological formation of the Lake District to highlight that - contrary to some representations of the Lake District as a timeless, stable landscape that should be preserved in its 'natural' state - the area has undergone substantial change throughout its history and has never been static. In fact, at the time when the rocks that form what we now call the Lake District were laid down, they were in the southern hemisphere, only moving to their current location over millions of years. They could, therefore, be described as 'immigrant rocks' – an idea that Massey uses to problematise the notion of intrinsic

indigeneity and local belonging, since it highlights that “even the soil is not ‘local’” (Massey, 2006, p.35). The tendency to see places as static and unchanging arises, in part, from the problem that these expansive temporalities are obscured by the shorter temporalities of our everyday lives, lifespans and histories.

The temporal processes enrolled in the creation of places and landscapes have recently been attended to in thinking not just about their past, but also their future. As will be discussed in 3.4, landscapes have an affective ability to ‘presence’ the past through evoking memories, but the ways in which they are ‘lived and storied’ can also help presence the intangible and uncertain possibilities of a future climate-changed landscape (Brace & Geoghegan, 2011; DeSilvey, 2012; Leyshon & Geoghegan, 2012). DeSilvey (2012), for instance, focuses on contestations around the future of Mullion Harbour (which is threatened by coastal erosion exacerbated by climate change; see 8.1) to propose the notion of an ‘anticipatory history’, whereby static, timeless representations of this ‘historical’ place might be replaced with narratives of how the locality has been ‘lived’, both prior to, and since, the harbour’s existence. She suggests that such ‘storying’ of landscape might open up possibilities for adjusting to the idea of Mullion Cove without its harbour through envisioning its pasts and anticipating alternative futures. Similarly, Brace and Geoghegan (2011, p.293) argue that framing landscape around a future-orientated temporality can “recognise multiple trajectories and…inspire the imagination to think differently about past, present and future in relation to self and place”.

Accounts such as these foreground the way in which places and landscapes have continually evolved, both in terms of their topography and the cultural meanings associated with them. They can, therefore, be “imagined as provisionally intertwined simultaneities of ongoing, unfinished stories” (Massey, 2006, p.21) that are understood only in relation to the histories and processes that create them. This type of approach allows places and landscapes to be seen as having meanings that constantly change

and are negotiated over time. As DeSilvey (2012) suggests, changes that alter forms within a place may become easier to accommodate within this type of conceptualisation, as change is recognised as simply a part of the ongoing place-making process. However, the extent to which this chimes with lay perceptions of place temporality is currently unclear, as most studies have explored such framings from a philosophical or auto-ethnographic perspective, rather than investigating their presence within lay knowledges. This is important because people's conceptualisations of place temporality are likely to have implications for their perceptions of place-based change. There is, therefore, a need for research that explores non-academic engagements with, and understandings of, the temporal nature of place, landscape and 'nature'. Thus, whilst this research views place as the product of relational processes, it is particularly interested in how place and landscape are conceptualised by rural residents themselves and the extent to which academic theories of place and landscape align with lay narratives.

3.4 Place, past and identity

Time and history are important elements in people's relationship with place. Cultural approaches to landscape and place reveal that forms of social heritage in the landscape have long acted to create a material and symbolic link to past people and places (e.g. Bender, 1993; Kearns & Collins, 2012). As 3.4.2 discusses, memory has also been shown to be important in imbuing places with personal meanings in a way which embeds the past into the materiality of the landscape itself (e.g. Tyner et al., 2012; Wylie, 2009). Attending to the histories, heritages and memories of a place, and considering how changes might draw-on, threaten or foreground these, is, therefore, an important part of understanding experiences of place and change.

3.4.1 Engaging with the past: History and heritage

History and memory are interrelated concepts that have been shown to be inherently political. Halbwachs (2007 [1950]), an influential early theoriser on memory, stressed that memory is not only an individual cognitive process; it can also be collectively produced in a manner which is simultaneously social and spatial. Memory is social because information about a group's past is collectively held and transmitted down to new generations through processes such as traditional practices, oral history and folklore (Fentress & Wickham, 1992). It is spatial because memories are anchored in particular settings or places, which may in turn play a role in their recollection.

In distinguishing between social memory and history, Nora (1989) argued that collective memory allows for multiple representations and interpretations to exist. He describes social memory as being collectively embedded in 'environments of memory', or *milieux de memoire* – that is, the traditional practices and oral histories of a social group. These *milieux de memoires* relate to particular places but are not formally inscribed upon them. Official sites of history, or *lieux de memoire* (which may be material objects or built forms of heritage, such as memorials and museums), on the other hand, are the products of a more self-conscious attempt to remember the past. Such *lieux de memoire* serve to fix and stabilise a particular version of the past on to that object or space.

This ability of history to 'fix' a particular (often elitist) version of the past can obscure alternative interpretations of, and claims to, historical sites, objects and their associated narratives. Heritage is thus a highly contested and politicised concept (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004). However, what Nora's arguably romanticist distinction between history and memory disguises is that memory too is subject to manipulation and contestation. Since social memory is multiple, different interpretations may conflict and certain versions may persist more dominantly than others. So, just as with history,

memory can be selective and can be manipulated to suit particular political purposes (Cubitt, 2007; Said, 2000). It can also be difficult to separate out the elements of social memory and history within any particular site, as historical 'fact' is often based on, or supported by, the records and recalled narratives of people who were involved in the particular event or period in question. Memories and oral narratives are, similarly, influenced by 'factual' historical information gleaned from people over the course of their everyday lives. It is not, therefore, possible to describe either history or memory as necessarily being more 'authentic' than the other.

These issues notwithstanding, historical narratives play an important part in how people identify with places today. The history and traditions of a place are frequently used by planners, estate agents, tourist agencies and so on as markers of distinctiveness. Historical features are used in the 'selling' of places to promote their attractiveness, often marking out particular areas as more desirable places to live and work than others (Atkinson, 2007; Kearns & Philo, 1993). Heritage and 'tradition' are also enrolled in the promotion of localities to tourists and in residents' collective performances of 'community' identity, particularly in rural areas (see 2.2.3).

The past is also important for individual constructions of place identity. The perceived character of a place and its people is often associated with its historical connotations – for instance, as a working-class industrial area (Mah, 2012), maritime port (Atkinson, 2007), or mining landscape (Laviolette & Baird, 2011). This can provide people with an important link to the 'roots' of a place or (for some) their forbearers, thus contributing to a sense of belonging. Interest in local history and the formation of local history societies has been increasing since the nineteenth century, particularly post-war, both in Britain and elsewhere (Beckett, 2007; Nash, 2005; Sheeran & Sheeran, 1998; van Eeden, 2012). Local history, and particularly rural local history, is also sometimes seen as a

way of 'building community' (Beckett, 2011)[1]. These developments in discourses of local history are perhaps testament to the notion that remembering and relating to the past can facilitate and reiterate a sense of place-related identity.

Some theorists have suggested that the desire to celebrate and conserve the past as 'heritage' is a modern phenomenon, arising from an increasing need to reconnect with local places under globalisation (Hoelscher, 2007). However, Harvey (2001) argues that heritage has always been a concern of society, but that the meanings associated with the concept are continuously changing. This can be seen in the way that some things deemed worthy of preserving as heritage today were considered ugly or undesirable relatively recently. For instance, in her discussion of the Cornish Mining landscape, Orange (2008, p.93) observes that, "the recent appearance of industrial World Heritage Sites is indicative of a general shift in society towards a perception that industrial remains are now old enough to be the past, important enough to be international heritage and attractive enough to visit". However, with increasing demands for land and challenges from erosive processes such as climate change, not everything can be preserved and maintained in perpetuity. At some heritage sites, difficult decisions are having to be made about what to conserve and what to abandon to natural processes of ruination (Davis, 2008; DeSilvey, 2012; Geoghegan & Leyshon, 2012).

Given this constantly changing nature of heritage as a concept, and of the meanings associated with particular sites and landscapes, it is difficult to predict how old and new features in a particular landscape are thought about and valued by local residents, and how this might change in the future. An exploration into how both historical and contemporary features are incorporated into current perceptions of place and

[1] However, local history group practices are also politically wrought, as histories can be contested, and such groups can be used to further the interests of rural elites (Woods, 2003; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994; Yarwood, 2002).

landscape (research questions 2 and 3) is thus useful in contextualising notions of heritage and understandings of temporal change or stasis.

3.4.2 Engaging with the past: Everyday space and memory

As well as formal or scripted ways of engaging with the past (e.g. local history groups, museums, heritage attractions etc.), everyday and mundane spaces and objects also conjure up images of past people and places and are important transmitters of social memory (DeSilvey, 2007; Moran, 2004). For instance, a number of geographers have explored how industrial ruins, whilst often thought of as derelict or wasted land, can have a powerful affective ability to produce 'hauntings' of the past through evoking memories. These hauntings may be associated with romantic nostalgia or painful feelings of loss (Mah, 2012). The residues and layering of meanings left behind as places change and are redeveloped over time thus serve to 'presence' the past in a fluid and undefined way that is left open to multifarious interpretation (Crang & Travlou, 2001; DeSilvey & Edensor, 2013; Edensor, 2005; 2008a).

Social memories can also be evoked and transmitted through the landscape itself. Riley and Harvey (2007) found that farmers' knowledge about landscape change was embedded in oral histories that were relayed during the research interviews. These histories included both biographical knowledge and 'genealogical knowledge', which had been passed down from their ancestors and informed current management practices. Discussions about past and present landscape change and management within the research interviews were prompted by, and inscribed upon, markers in the physical landscape. Thus:

> "Recalling landscape development and agricultural change was not an abstract process, but rather the material landscape carries forward understandings which become co-constructed, unpacked and narrated by farmers. Taking their cue from the physical landscape, such oral histories were commonly intertwined with biographical events, which allowed a temporal structure to be added to recollections. The ways in which landscape change is remembered and recalled, therefore, is seen as

> relational (cf.Setten, 2004) such that they are located and contextualised in relation to other events"
>
> (Riley & Harvey, 2007, p.401).

The biographical and genealogical knowledges that Riley and Harvey uncovered were also embodied in particular agricultural practices. Some farmers carried out certain tasks in a particular manner because that was 'the way it has always been done', rather than because they had consciously and logically planned them that way, revealing how past land management practices become embedded in current activities through embodied acts of repetition over time (Riley & Harvey, 2007). Agricultural practices are, however, highly dynamic and in some instances 'progressive' farmers may alternatively use memories of the past to reject or modify traditional practices.

Such entwining of biographical and genealogical knowledges is also indicative of how collective memories and understandings become incorporated into personal experiences and memories (Jones, 2011; Jones & Garde-Hansen, 2012). The landscape and its history are important for individual and emotional, as well as collective, dialectical relationships and identifications with the past. Setten provides a personal account (alongside empirical evidence from interviews with other farmers) of how, "the land becomes the product and the producer of, in many ways, a private landscape heritage" (Setten, 2005, p.68). For Setten, who grew up on a farm in Norway, her knowledge of the land was informed both by her experiences of growing up on it and the stories that had been told to her about her family's role (past and present) in farming it. For instance, she knew where the best spot to shoot moose in the autumn was from previously walking the land with her father, who had relayed his and his own father's previous hunting encounters. This knowledge had become embodied in her own experiences and practical engagements with the landscape. Setten's understanding of the land's heritage was thus particular to her and incorporated knowledge gained through both collective and personal experiences - past and present.

Jones (2011) has called for memory to be given greater consideration in the exploration of nonrepresentational engagements with place and landscape, as it turns attention to how the past makes itself known in the present. Memories are often spontaneous, involuntary and re-worked according to the contexts in which they are recalled. Memory both has an effect on how the present is experienced and understood, and is reinterpreted in light of the current moment. Thus, "memory not only informs/enables the performative moment, there is an creative exchange between the two" (Jones, 2011, p.877). Given this dialectical relationship between memory and experience, an engagement with a particular landscape at a given moment cannot be seen as an isolated happening; it is also informed by prior experiences of that and other landscapes (Crouch, 2010).

Memories evoked by a familiar place often have deep emotional associations for the embodied individual, affecting their engagement with it. Memory, emotion, self and landscape are thus intricately entwined (Jones, 2005). This chimes with the recent post-phenomenological assertions about the co-presence of self and landscape discussed earlier. Wylie (2009), in particular, explicates the role of memory in the iterative creation of landscape and self by considering how memorial benches on Mullion's coastline invoke engagements with and between landscape, absence and love through memory. He describes the benches as, "visible markers or material manifestations of memory and love", which, through their articulation of loss and their positioning in the landscape, enable both a "looking with and looking at the person being commemorated" (Wylie, 2009, p.281).

The literature discussed here has highlighted that - whether through formal processes of history and heritage, collective forms of remembering social histories, or personal memories - places and landscapes are imbued with traces of the past. It has also established such engagements with the past as important aspects of people's relationship with place and construction of place-based identity. Constructions of, and

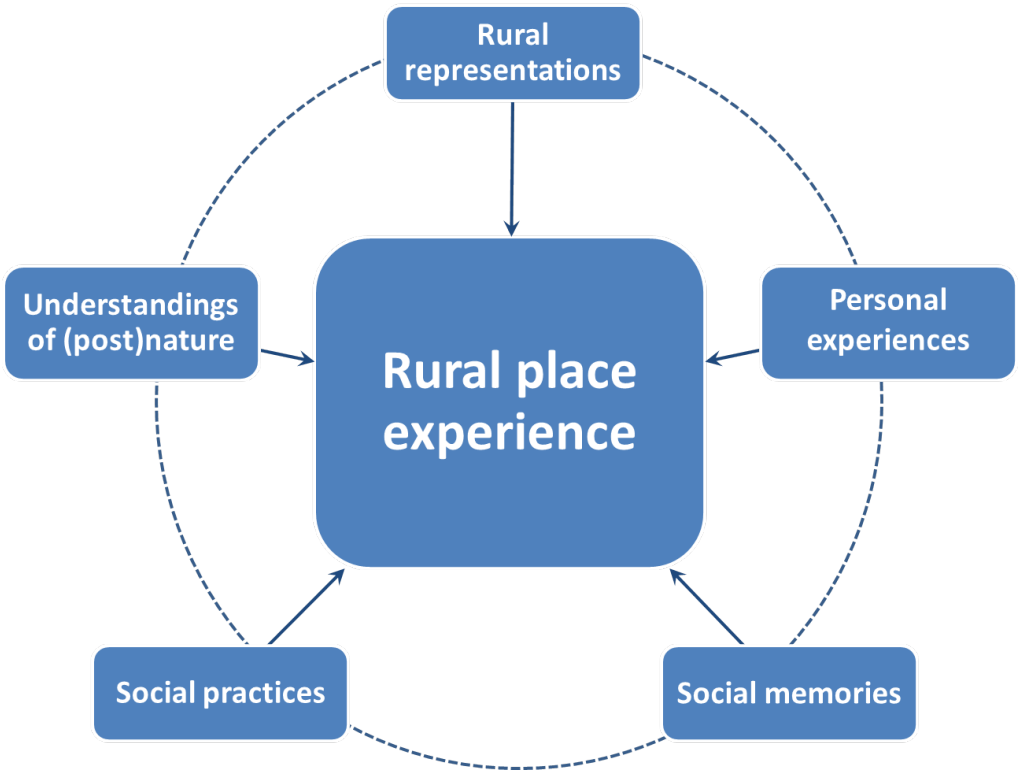
identifications with, a place's past are thus vital to consider when seeking to understand responses to change.

3.5 Conclusion

In addition to the gaps identified in Chapter Two, this chapter has identified some further areas of weakness in current knowledge, which the thesis addresses. Whilst the concepts of place, landscape and rurality have been debated at length by human geographers, these deliberations have generally been based on philosophical or auto-ethnographical reflections, rather than derived from empirical work with lay populations (at least in the UK context) (Latham, 2003). Consequently, there appears to be limited empirical research investigating how lay understandings of the concepts 'place' and 'landscape' – and their temporality - align with these academic theories. Furthermore, although there has been increasing recognition of the role of the past within people's experience of place and landscape, it remains unclear how social and personal engagements with the past interact (both with each other and with the conceptual notions of place and temporality) to shape perceptions of, and responses to, change in rural areas. Research question 1 (*how is the past enrolled in individual and collective relationships with rural place and responses to change?)* is thus intended to foreground the temporal aspects of people's relationships with place, landscape and change. Both physical and social aspects of place-change are included in this focus so that their relative significance can be evaluated and their interconnections explored.

From the sizeable literatures discussed in this and the previous chapter, it is now possible to identify some key elements contributing to individuals' experiences of place and constructions of place-based identity, which will help guide and structure the succeeding discussions of the research findings. These are: rural representations; personal experiences; understandings of (post-)'nature'; social memories; and social

practices. These facets of place experience are loosely reminiscent of Halfacree's (2006a) three-fold model of rural space, in which the locality, representations and everyday practices of a place can be seen to come together to produce a rural place. However, whilst Halfacree's model provides a useful framework for understanding how rural space is produced, it does not fully encompass - or at least make explicit - the different processes that contribute to how that space is *experienced* by rural residents (though this is to some extent covered within the 'everyday lives' aspect of the triad). Fig. 3.1 is thus designed to summarise the broad factors that influence how a rural place is experienced and given identity from an individualistic viewpoint.



- Rural representations – the array of ideas about what 'rural' places are and how they should be managed (both hegemonic and alternative versions).
- Personal experiences – including personal memories, family histories and embodied engagements with place and landscape.
- Social memories – the transfer and perpetuation of group-held meanings regarding the place and its inhabitants, past and present. Includes notions about history and heritage.
- Social practices – such as the activities of community groups, village events and social interaction with neighbours. Includes performative aspects of rural identity.
- Understandings of (post)nature – the various ways in which the non-human world is conceived within society (both hegemonic and alternative versions).

Figure 3.1: A conceptual summary of factors influencing place-experience

As with Halfacree's model, these elements of place experience are dialectically interrelated – as indicated by the dotted line connecting them. Personal memories and experiences relating to place, for example, will be influenced by a number of discourses about 'nature', culture and rurality, which themselves may be contradictory and formed from an accumulation of personal and shared experiences over time. Place experiences - and place identities related to this - are thus markedly relational, as they are enmeshed within, and emerge from, a complex network of individual and social ideas. These processes also have a distinctly temporal character, and exploring the varying perceptions of this temporality is important for understanding how the histories, identities and transformations of places are conceived.

Representing these factors in a diagram inevitably involves an artificial simplification of the processes influencing rural place experience. Fig. 3.1 should not, therefore, be seen as implying that these complex factors and processes can be neatly and holistically categorised according to the six labels it contains. It does, however, provide a useful guide for organising the following discussions around these themes. The various elements of rural place experience and identity summarised in Fig. 3.1 are addressed throughout the thesis, reflecting the considerable overlap between them. However, 'rural representations' and 'personal experiences' will be especially explored in Chapter Six, 'social memories' and 'social practices' in Chapter Seven, and 'understandings of (post)-nature' in Chapter Eight. Following the development of a more sophisticated representational framework based on the research findings (Chapter Nine), the factors are then pulled together in Chapter Ten's discussion of attitudes towards existing windfarms. Before commencing with the discussion of the research's empirical findings, however, the next two chapters provide the background to the case studies and explain the research methods employed.

As outlined in 3.2.3, examining the plurality of factors involved in rural place experience necessitates attending to both the discursive and experiential aspects of people-place

relationships. The thesis thus takes a middle-ground theoretical approach, which acknowledges the relational, networked nature of rural place but remains alert to the influence of both representations and direct encounters over experiences of rural place and landscape.

Chapter 4. A case study approach

4.1 Introduction

To meet the aims of the research, a qualitative and inductive case-study approach was chosen. This consisted primarily of in-depth interviews, but was also supported by ethnographic techniques, in three English villages.

At the core of the research aim is an interest in better understanding the temporal aspects of people's relationships with the place in which they live, and the implications of these for attitudes towards change. Whilst elements of these relationships have been investigated through quantitative studies (particularly within the environmental psychology literature on place attachment, see Lewicka (2011b)), I take a qualitative and inductive approach with the view that these techniques are more able to capture the nuances, intricacies and specificities involved in experiences of place, landscape and change. This aligns with the more qualitative stance taken by human geographers researching the concepts of dwelling (Cloke & Jones, 2001; Wylie, 2003), place identity and sense of place (de Wit, 2012; Relph, 1976; Spinney, 2006; Tuan, 1977). Chapter Three showed that ideas about place, landscape and temporality are infused with a multiplicity of socially-influenced and personally-experienced values, beliefs, memories and meanings, which are, by their nature, difficult to determine and quantify. A qualitative approach using in-depth interviews in a small number of case studies (see Chapter Five for a discussion of the specific methodological techniques used), is, therefore, better equipped to explore and interpret the multiplicity and complexity of these perspectives and meanings than (for example) a quantitative questionnaire that, whilst being useful for its broadness, restricts participants to selecting primarily pre-defined responses.

This approach, in part, answers Devine-Wright's (2013b) call for a greater use of qualitative, biographical methods in investigating place attachment processes and exploring the dynamic nature of such relationships (although qualitative approaches have been used much more widely in geographical research on place and identity). Through its focus on windfarms, the study also adds to the relatively sparse qualitative research into attitudes towards renewable energy projects (exceptions include Devine-Wright & Devine-Wright, 2009; Ellis *et al.*, 2007; Haggett et al., 2011; Vergunst *et al.*, 2009). As Ellis et al. (2007) contend, this is important because quantitative approaches are vulnerable to a positivist tendency to seek a single objective 'truth', and can neglect the complexity of windfarm debates. They argue that an emphasis on identifying quantifiable factors of windfarm opposition has led to poor explanatory findings that oversimplify the issues. Whilst this criticism is levelled primarily at studies of proposed sites, the principles also apply to an investigation of existing windfarms. Qualitative approaches that recognise and accommodate the multiple and context-dependent values, judgements and subjectivities involved in the formation of attitudes towards windfarms are, therefore, considered most appropriate for this research.

In this chapter, I provide further explanation for choosing a case study approach to the research, before introducing the three case studies, which form the essential context for the remainder of the thesis. The order in which the case studies are discussed here reflects that in which the fieldwork was undertaken, but has no other significance. The landscape types of each case study area are described, along with significant features that form part of the villages' characters and histories. Basic information regarding the areas' populations and economies is also provided, and particular attention is given to the circumstances surrounding the construction of local windfarms. These case study introductions remain entirely descriptive here, but they provide an important context for the analyses that follow in subsequent chapters.

4.2 Using case studies

The study of how people engage with the places and landscapes in which they reside, and how this relationship is affected by change, requires an in-depth, qualitative approach that delves into the nuances and complexities of perceptions, values and attitudes. Places are, to a degree, defined by their social, political, historical and other contexts. A case study approach allows the particularities and complexities of local meanings associated with these to be fully explored, recognised and embraced, without losing the meaningful characteristics of the wider context (Stake, 2008; Yin, 2009). Whilst the inability to draw statistical generalisations from a small number of case studies poses some limitations to the approach (Lijphart, 1971; Yin, 2009), these are not considered to be overriding, as the method remains an effective way of exploring, developing and affirming or challenging theoretical ideas (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the use of three case studies here enables a certain amount of analytical generalisation (Curtis et al., 2000) by providing insights into common themes, issues and discursive ideas that occur across rural places; thereby avoiding purely idiosyncratic conclusions and contributing to wider understandings of people's experiences of place, landscape and change.

The specificity of places, and inductive nature of the research (see also 5.4), offers broad scope for the selection of case studies. However, careful consideration of potential cases' characteristics was necessary to provide the research with some level of focus and comparison. The study's particular interest in rural landscapes and attitudes towards existing windfarms provided an initial starting point for narrowing down the options. Mallet's (2013) online map of renewable energy projects in the UK was used to review the distribution of windfarms and identify projects that met the criteria of having existed for some years (10 or more), and of being located close to a settlement generally considered 'rural' but large enough to allow sufficient recruitment of participants. The spatial spread of the case studies was also considered, as a variety

of landscape types and socio-economic contexts was desired to allow consideration of how such variations might influence the ways in which place and change are perceived. The list of potential case studies arising from this review was then further refined by contacting the relevant parish councils to gauge their interest in supporting the research by, for instance, assisting with interview recruitment. Practical considerations, such as distance from the research base (and thus manageable time and costs), were also considered. This process resulted in the selection of the villages of Mullion in Cornwall, Askam and Ireleth (two adjoining villages) in Cumbria, and Martham in Norfolk (see Fig. 4.1).

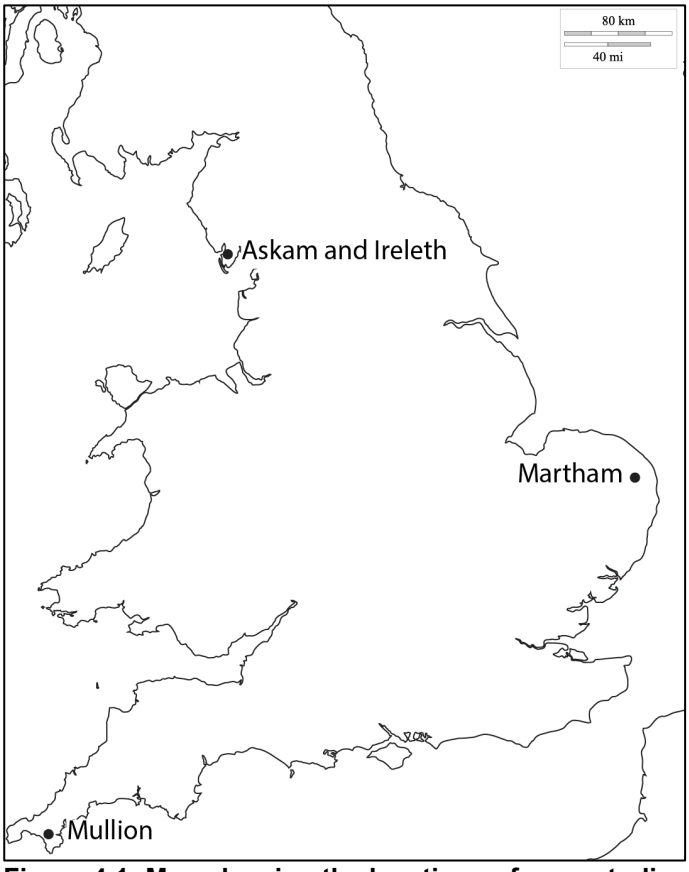


Figure 4.1: Map showing the locations of case studies

These villages are broadly alike in their population sizes and proximity to established windfarms, which makes them reasonably comparable when investigating attitudes to change and windfarms in particular (see Table 4.1). As is common in rural areas of the UK (Heley & Jones, 2013), the case studies all have an older than average demographic (though this deviation is more pronounced in Mullion and Martham than

Askam and Ireleth) (see Fig. 4.2) and a lower than average ethnic diversity (97% of people in Mullion, 98% in Martham, and 98% in Askam and Ireleth, identify as White British, compared to England's average of 80% (Office for National Statistics, 2011)). The villages also all lie within, or close to, landscapes that have been recognised under national landscape designations.

Table 4.1: Summary of case study characteristics

	Year windfarm first became operational	No. turbines in windfarm	Approx. distance from windfarm	Landscape characteristics	Pop. of parish (2011 census)
Mullion	1993	6	1.7 miles from edge. 2 miles from village centre.	• Coastline with steep cliffs and sandy bays • Open heathland • AONB	2,091
Askam and Ireleth	1999	7	0.5 miles from edge. 1 mile from village centre.	• Estuary coastline • Industrial heritage • Just outside Lake District National Park	3,462
Martham	1992	10	1 mile from edge. 1.5 miles from village centre.	• Flat, low-lying Norfolk Broads • Waterways & traditional windmills	3,569

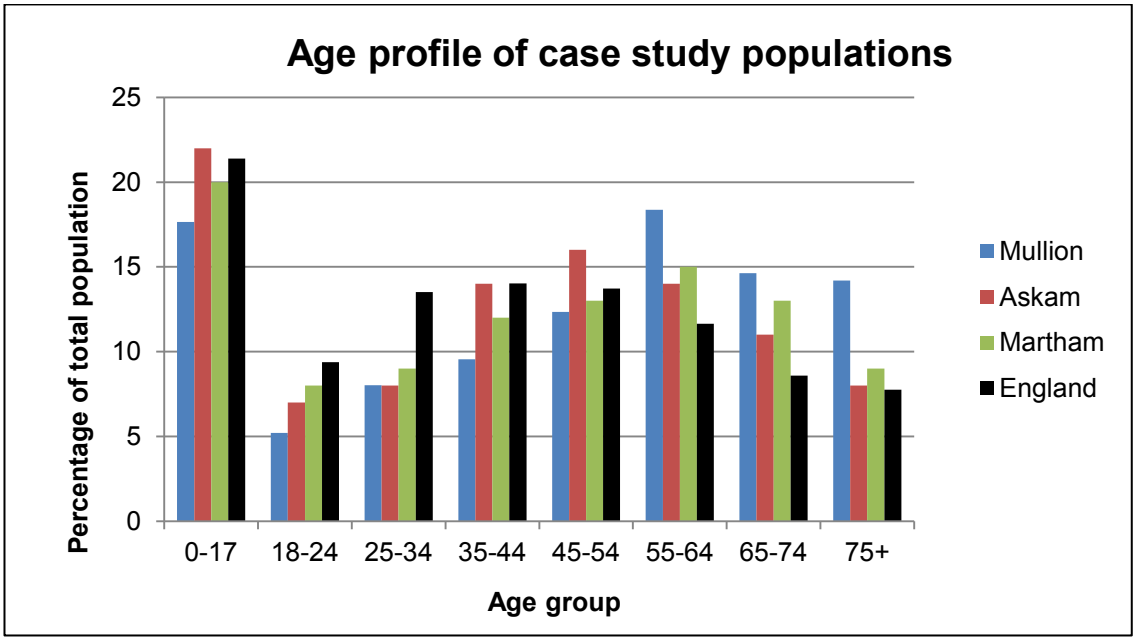


Figure 4.2: Age profile of case study populations (derived from Office for National Statistics, 2011)

On the other hand, the case studies' varied landscape settings and socio-economic contexts provide scope for exploring a diversity of place-related meanings and

interpretations and the influence of these on experiences of place and change. Another important point concerns differences between the case studies in the cumulative number of wind turbines in the area, as these have implications for understanding attitudes towards the local windfarm in each village. These differences are discussed in the case study introductions, but are also summarised in Table 4.2, which portrays the current number of wind turbines in each of the case studies' counties.

Table 4.2: Numbers of wind turbines in case studies' counties (as of 30th October 2014 (Renewable UK, 2014))*

	Operational projects with 1 or 2 turbines	Operational projects with 3 or more turbines	Total operational projects	Total operational turbines	Turbines consented or under construction
Cornwall	16	7	23	92	60
Cumbria	2	25	27	287	136
Norfolk	5	3	8	131	111

*Only includes projects greater than 100kW.

The similarities and differences touched on here inevitably, and necessarily, lead to a certain amount of comparison between the case studies. However, the research should not be seen as strictly comparative, as the specificities and nuances of place result in too many variables to facilitate a straightforward comparison. The data presented here should, therefore, be considered contextual in the main. The aim is to use each place to consider common experiences and attitudes, and to highlight examples of how the particularities of place and personal experience influence people-place-change relationships.

4.3 Introducing the case studies

4.3.1 Mullion

The parish of Mullion is situated on the coast of the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall, South West England (see Fig. 4.3). The coastline, much of which is owned by the National Trust, is characterised by steep cliffs with a number of small, sandy coves. Inland, the

area encompasses Predannack Downs, which is an area of heathland on a raised plateau home to a nature reserve (Lizard National Nature Reserve) and a World War II airfield (now part of Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) Culdrose). The parish stretches from the coast to the edge of Goonhilly Downs, which is particularly known for its Satellite Earth Station, whose satellite dishes have formed a visible part of the landscape since 1962.

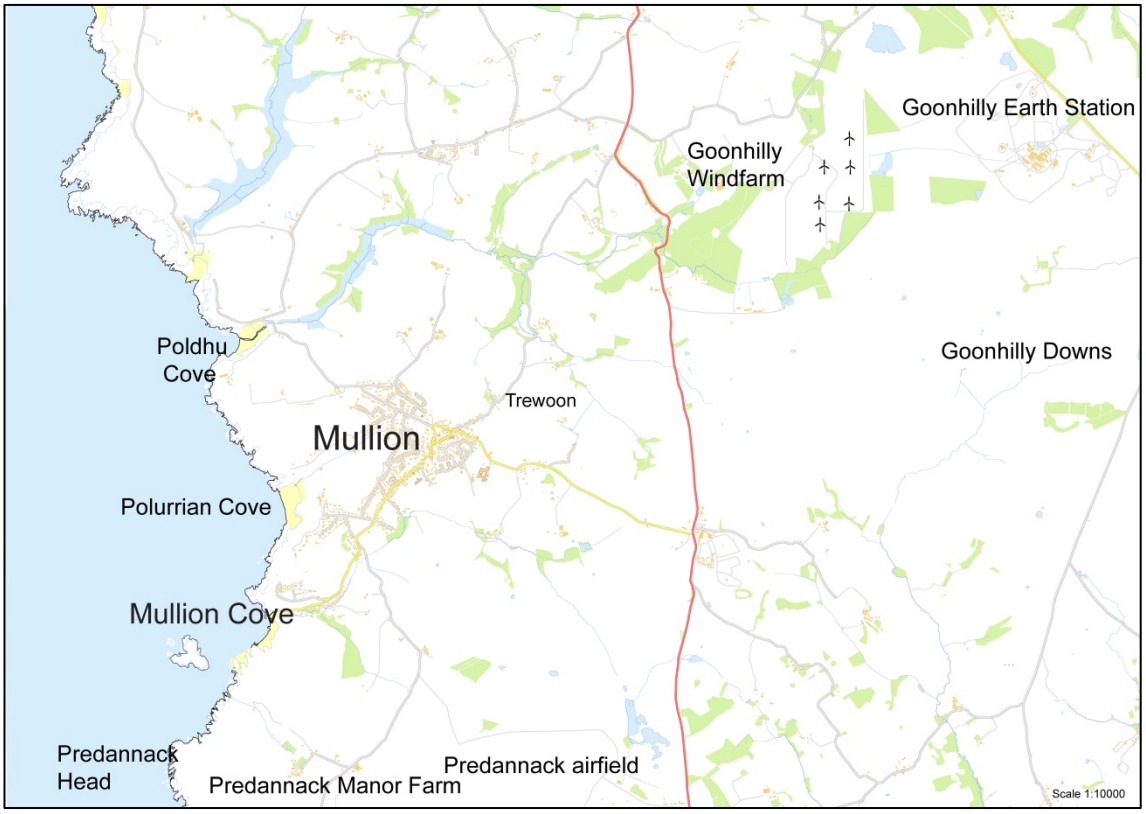


Figure 4.3: Map of Mullion

The Mullion countryside is used for both agriculture (primarily pastoral) and nature conservation. The parish lies within the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and contains three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), with the area being important for a number of plants and animals, such as Cornish heath and choughs. Mullion's surrounding area is now subject to stringent planning restrictions, although the number of dwellings in the parish has increased significantly in the last few decades. For instance, between 2001 and 2011, the number of dwellings increased by 12% (Office for National Statistics, 2001; 2011).

Although traditionally developed predominantly around farming, the local economy is now dominated by tourism, with the area's population growing significantly in the summer months. A total of 8.2% of the dwellings are used for second homes (Cornwall Council, 2012) and holiday accommodation is offered by numerous campsites, B&Bs, hotels and holiday lets. RNAS Culdrose and the towns of Helston and Falmouth, which are all within easy commuting distance, provide additional employment opportunities but, like the rest of Cornwall, much local work is low-paid and seasonal.

In 2011, the parish had a usual resident population of 2,091 and the oldest demographic of the three case studies; 39.6% are over the age of 60, compared to 22.4% of the national population (Office for National Statistics, 2011). Cornwall as a county also has an older than average demographic but, contrary to local 'myths', this deviation is largely due to 'natural population ageing' in terms of changes in life expectancy and working-age net migration, rather than in-migration purely for retirement purposes (Cornwall Council, 2011). Whether this is also the reason behind Mullion's population profile is difficult to establish, but local discourses certainly portray Mullion as a popular retirement destination for people from outside of the county. Perhaps due to this large retired population, there are numerous 'community' groups within the village of Mullion and several sites act as centres for social activity. These include a Post Office, park, playground, Women's Institute hall, British Legion hall, three churches (Methodist, Church of England and Roman Catholic), two pubs, and a Youth and Community Centre. There is also a primary school, secondary school, health centre, and a handful of small shops. These forums give the village a relatively bustling feel, even outside the main holiday season.

Mullion village is situated approximately one mile from the sea and Mullion Cove, where a few buildings surround a nineteenth-century harbour. The harbour has been owned by the National Trust since 1945 and is frequently depicted on postcards representing Mullion and The Lizard. Initially built in 1891 to provide shelter for trading

ships and to assist the community's pilchard fishing industry (Felce, 2012), today the harbour is used primarily for recreational boats. Tourists and locals also use the harbour walls for other recreational purposes; mainly as 'a place to sit'. The two arms, or 'piers', of Mullion Harbour are increasingly being damaged by winter storms, and the future threat of erosion and sea level rise has led the National Trust to decide on a policy of managed retreat for the harbour, whereby future storm damage will not necessarily be repaired. The cove will, therefore, be returned to its 'natural' state at some (unspecified) point in the future. This anticipated change, which the community has been grappling with since the decision was made in 2005, is further discussed in Chapter Eight.

Plate 4.1: Mullion Cove

Goonhilly Earth Station (GES) is the site where the first trans-Atlantic satellite signal was received. Originally owned by the UK Post Office and then transferred to British Telecom (BT), the station was at one time a popular tourist attraction, although its visitor centre closed in 2010 following the cessation of operations in 2008. The site was bought by GES Ltd in 2011 and is now being developed as a space science centre, which will again include a visitor and education centre open to the public. Famous for being a technological 'first', the station is generally spoken about with an element of pride within Mullion (see 8.4).

Goonhilly Windfarm, which is operated by REG Windpower (formerly Cornwall Light & Power), is situated adjacent to the Earth Station site and first became operational in 1993. Although situated just outside the parish of Mullion, the windfarm is clearly visible from the north-eastern side of the village. Initially, it comprised fourteen 25-metre high, 400 kilowatt wind turbines, but these were replaced with six larger, 107-metre high, 2 megawatt turbines in 2010. The Goonhilly windfarm was one of the forerunners in the

UK; built just two years after the Delabole windfarm in the northeast of Cornwall. At the time of its construction, therefore, there were few other turbines in the landscape, but Cornwall now has a large number of windfarms and single-turbine projects (see Table 4.2).

Plate 4.2: Goonhilly Windfarm

Although there was initial local controversy regarding the construction of Goonhilly Windfarm, I found no evidence of any major protest (at least in comparison to subsequent UK windfarm-related controversies reported in the media). Planning records show that objections were made to the original proposal, but little mention was made of the issue in local newspapers and current residents did not recall much of a controversy, indicating the absence of any large, organised protest group.

Originally, the windfarm was not accompanied by any official 'community benefits', but when the farm was 're-powered' in 2010, the operators, REG Windpower, introduced a community fund of £48,000 a year, for which local groups can bid. At the time of fieldwork in 2012, I heard little about this community fund, but information now appears

to be more readily available on the REG Windpower website (2014), which includes news about successful community bids, school visits and information events.

Interestingly, Mullion has attracted the attention of other geographers looking at landscape and temporality. The Mullion coast is the setting for Wylie's (2009) paper on landscape, absence and love, in which he considers how the cliff-top memorial benches interact with the landscape to presence the absent person(s) being memorialised (see 3.4.2). Presence and absence in the landscape are also explored by Leyshon and Brace (2012), who contend that cattle grids on the Lizard peninsula, installed by Natural England as an environmental management measure, serve as 'anticipatory objects' that presence an imminent and uncertain future of a climate-changed world. Addressing similar themes, DeSilvey focuses on narratives about Mullion Harbour's past and future in her exploration of 'anticipatory histories' and their potential to offer alternative ways of "storying landscape, framing histories around movement rather than stasis, and drawing connections between past dynamism and future process" (DeSilvey, 2012, p.31). These studies offer insights into some of the interpretations, connections and narratives surrounding the Mullion landscape upon which my own research builds (see 8.2 in particular).

4.3.2 Askam and Ireleth

The parish of Askam and Ireleth encompasses the two adjoining villages of Askam-in-Furness and Ireleth and has a population of 3,462. The population age is closer to the national average than in Mullion and Martham, though is still slightly older (26% are over the age of 60, compared to the national average of 22.4%) (Office for National Statistics, 2011). The parish is located on Cumbria's Furness peninsula, approximately eight miles north of the town of Barrow-in-Furness (hereafter referred to as Barrow) and ten miles south of the Lake District National Park (see Fig. 4.4). Whilst Barrow is an area of heavy industry, Askam and Ireleth lie within a more rural landscape and

enjoy expansive views over the Duddon estuary towards the Cumbrian mountains. Askam-in-Furness, the larger and younger of the two villages, lies at sea level on the banks of the Duddon estuary. Separated from Askam by a railway line, Ireleth is built on the steep slopes of Hare Slack Hill and traces its history to the Viking era. Although traditionally two separate villages, Askam and Ireleth are now administered as one community and this thesis (like most residents) uses the shorthand 'Askam' to refer to both as a singular village, unless otherwise stated. However, it should be noted that many of the findings discussed in the following chapters (particularly regarding the village's history; see 7.3 and 8.3) relate primarily to Askam-in-Furness rather than Ireleth.

Figure 4.4: Map of Askam and Ireleth

Whilst Ireleth was traditionally built around farming, Askam was founded as a result of a boom in the iron-ore mining industry following the discovery of the second largest iron-ore deposit in the country - the Park deposit - in the area in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The iron industry played a significant role in the shaping of Askam's physical and social character, with terraced houses being built for the mine workers and streets being named in association with the industry. Workers migrated to Askam

from other mining areas such as Cornwall and Wales during this period, with many of their descendants remaining in the village today. Although the iron industry thrived to begin with, by the early twentieth century the deposits began to run out, and the Askam ironworks closed in 1918 (although some pits continued to run at nearby Roanhead). The structures associated with the ironworks remained standing until they were demolished in 1933, but the site remained derelict until 1992 when a housing estate - 'Parklands' - was built on it. The landscape around Askam remains visibly marked, however, by the mining industry, as many slag banks, spoil heaps, drainage lakes, and other physical reminders have been left abandoned or re-appropriated for other uses (Parklands, for instance, is built on top of a thick layer of slag). The significance of these remnants for processes of social memory and place identity are discussed in Chapter Eight (see also Wheeler (2014), Appendix A).

Plate 4.3: An example of terraced houses originally built for mine-workers

Plate 4.4: View from Askam over the Duddon estuary at low tide

From 1953 until 1996, a major employer in Askam was K-Shoe, which had a shoe-making factory in the centre of the village and significantly contributed to social life through the K-Shoe Sports and Social Club. The factory site is now used by a company that makes stress-balls, but this provides minimal employment opportunities. Some local industry remains at Askam brickworks and Greenscoe quarry, but most residents commute to nearby towns such as Barrow (particularly to work in the shipyards) and Millom, or to the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant, thirty-two miles along the coast at Seascale. There are a number of well-used sites that act as social hubs within the village, including four community halls, three churches (Church of England, Methodist and Roman Catholic), a pub, playground, skate park, and several sports clubs (rugby, football, cricket and bowling). There is also a primary school, a few small shops and businesses, and a railway station.

Plate 4.5: An un-sealed road in Askam

Plate 4.6: Askam allotments or 'pens'

Today, Askam's housing contains a mix of the original miners' terraced houses, older cottages (some thatched) in Ireleth, and post-war and modern housing estates – the largest and most recent of these being 'Parklands'. Askam is not generally considered to be a picturesque village (see 7.3.1), as it is characterised by un-manicured features such as un-sealed roads and what are locally referred to as 'pens'. These pens, mostly located on the edge of the village by the estuary shore, are similar to allotments and are seen as something of an Askam tradition. They are generally enclosed by high, corrugated iron fences and host a variety of uses, including rearing poultry, growing vegetables, keeping pigeons (a traditional practice in Askam), storing old machinery,

and re-building cars. Although Askam is unlikely to be described as a 'chocolate-box' village, the beauty of the surrounding landscape is widely commented upon and the area is rich in wildlife. The Duddon estuary is a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance), and an area of Askam's shoreline has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Sandscale Haws National Nature Reserve also lies approximately one mile south of Askam and is accessible at low tide by walking along the beach.

The Far Old Park windfarm is built on a hill overlooking Askam and Ireleth, approximately half a mile from the edge of Ireleth and clearly visible from both villages. Operational since 1999, the windfarm is owned by E.ON (formerly PowerGen Renewables) and consists of seven 40-metre high, 660-kilowatt turbines. The windfarm proved to be far more controversial than those in Mullion and Martham. Objections were made during the planning process (including by Askam and Ireleth Parish Council), but the height of protest occurred after the windfarm had been constructed, primarily on the basis of noise, size, and breach of planning conditions. According to The Telegraph, the windfarm has "sparked the most complaints about windfarms in the country" (Gray, 2010). An organised protest group, Marton[2], Askam and Ireleth Against Windfarms (MAIWAG) was set up following the windfarm's construction to campaign for it to be removed; the noise impact to be reduced; and the planning of further windfarms in the area to be prevented. Legal action was taken by some residents against PowerGen in 2003 under the Environmental Protection Act for noise nuisance, but was unsuccessful (BBC News, 2004; see also McLachlan & Mander, 2013).

Cumbria, as a county, has a high number of windfarms (see Table 4.2), including a number on the Furness peninsula and at Haverigg, directly across the Duddon estuary from Askam. The Haverigg wind turbines are visible from Askam and a large offshore windfarm at Barrow can also be seen on a clear day from the estuary shore at Askam

[2] Marton is a small village over the brow of the hill from Ireleth.

or from the top of Hare Slack Hill. Cumulative impacts may, therefore, be implicated in objections to the Far Old Park windfarm; an issue I return to in Chapter Ten. Another relevant feature of the area is its association with other forms of energy generation. As well as the nuclear reprocessing plant at Sellafield, there is a major gas terminal, Rampside Gas Terminal, at Barrow. Building on this history of energy generation in West Cumbria, in 2009 'Britain's Energy Coast' was established as a partnership between the nuclear industry, local authorities and private-sector members, with the aim of "capitalis[ing] on a potential £90 billion investment in the local nuclear industry and exploit[ing] opportunities in high-growth Clean Technologies such as solar, wind and biofuels" (Britain's Energy Coast, 2014, no page number).

Plate 4.7: Far Old Park Windfarm on the hill above Askam and Ireleth

4.3.3 Martham

The parish of Martham has a population of 3,569. Like Mullion, the population age is notably higher than average, with 31.3% of people over the age of 60 (compared to the national average of 22.4) (Office for National Statistics, 2011). The village is located approximately three miles from the East Norfolk coast, on the edge of the Broads; a 300km^2 network of shallow waterways and lakes amidst flat, low-lying land (see Fig.

4.5). The lakes, or 'broads', are not naturally occurring but were created as a result of Medieval peat-digging pits becoming flooded as sea levels rose. They are now a distinguishing feature of Norfolk and act as a key tourist attraction, particularly for boating holidays. The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads are now part of the UK National Park family and, as the country's largest area of protected wetland, are considered highly important for wildlife conservation (Broads Authority, 2014).

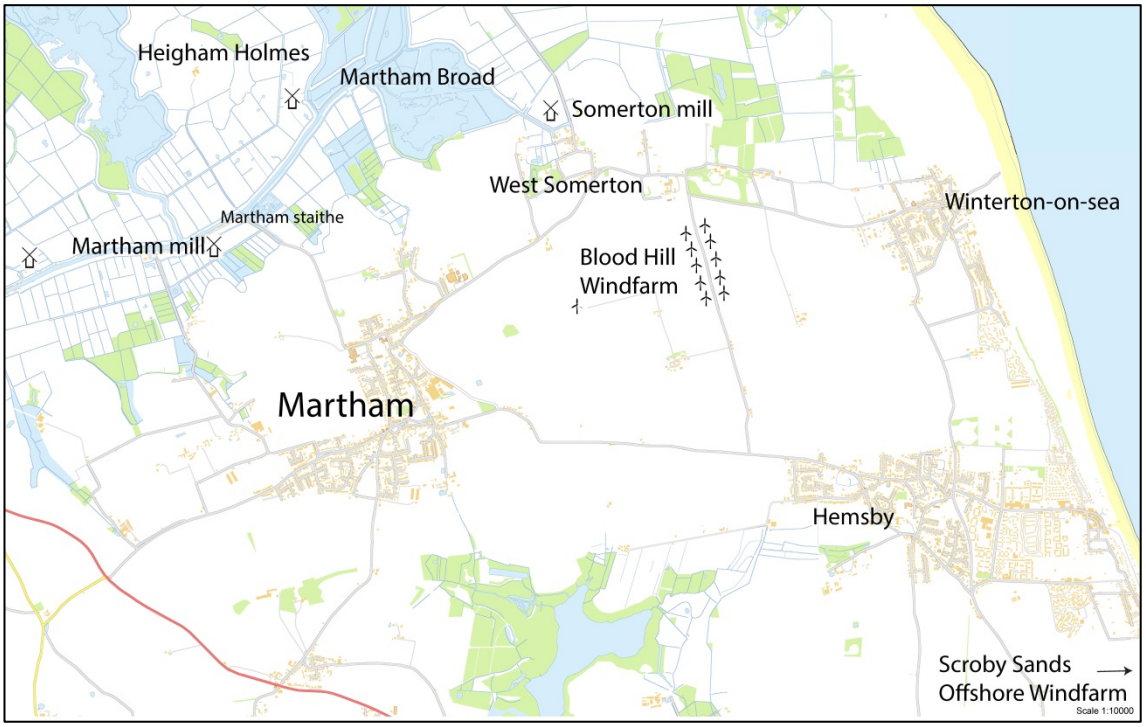


Figure 4.5: Map of Martham

Martham has its own broad on the River Thurne, which is a National Nature Reserve, as well as a staithe[3] and private boatyard. A 'ferry' (moveable bridge) provides a link from the Martham side of the river to Heigham Holmes (another nature reserve and island owned by the National Trust) but public access is currently restricted to one day a year for conservation reasons. Some of the marshy land close to the river and Martham Broad is used for grazing but agriculture in

Plate 4.8: Martham staithe

[3] A staithe is a small wharf cut into the river bank.

the area is predominantly arable. The surrounding landscape is characterised by large, open fields, and crops include sugar beet, lettuces, wheat and barley.

Plate 4.9: Martham wind-pump with its sails removed; now a dwelling

A famous feature of Norfolk is its old wind pumps (commonly referred to as windmills), which date back to the eighteenth century. These were originally used mostly for drainage (though some also ground corn/flour), but this task is now mostly performed by modern, electric pumps. Many of the structures remain, however, and some have been converted into houses or tourist attractions. Of the fifteen that once stood along the River Thurne, thirteen remain standing, including one at Martham (now a dwelling, with its sails removed; see Plate 4.9), one at neighbouring Somerton (disused, with sails still attached) and one at the nearby village of Horsey (now restored and run as a visitor attraction by the National Trust).

Martham itself is set slightly back from the river and lies one metre above sea level on an area known as the Isle of Flegg. Human inhabitation of Flegg is believed to stretch back to approximately 600AD, and the oldest remaining settlement in the village, Moregrove Manor, is thought to be at least nine hundred years old (Martham Local History Group, 2012). There are thus a number of old buildings in Martham, although the addition of housing estates and in-fills since the Second World War has contributed significantly to its size. Martham retains its 'original' large village green, which has always been common land and is generally seen as the centre of the village. In the words of Martham Parish Council, "Martham retains much of the charm of a traditional English village, epitomised by its village greens and ponds" (Martham Parish Council, 2010, no page number).

Plate 4.10: Martham village green

The village is relatively well-served in terms of services and facilities. These include a community centre and playing fields, village hall, Post Office, health centre, children's centre, two schools (a high school and a primary school), three churches (Church of England, Methodist and Baptist), two small supermarkets, two pubs and a care home. Traditionally, agriculture (and to some extent fishing at nearby Winterton-on-Sea) dominated the area's economy, but, whilst still playing a large role in the area's economy, intensification of the industry means that it no longer offers the main form of local employment. Small, non-agricultural businesses in Martham, including a garage and an engineering firm (located in a small area of industrial units on the edge of Martham), provide some employment but many residents commute to Great Yarmouth (eleven miles away) or Norwich (nineteen miles).

Located in fields approximately one mile to the east of Martham village is Blood Hill Windfarm. Originally owned by E.ON, but taken over by Burnley Energy Partnership LLP in 2012, the farm consisted of ten 30-metre high, 225-kilowatt wind turbines at the time of fieldwork in September 2013 (see Plate 4.11). These have since been replaced by two similar-sized, but more efficient, 400-kilowatt turbines in Spring 2014. Like

Goonhilly Windfarm, Blood Hill was one of the first windfarms to be built in the UK, with operation commencing in December 1992. An additional, larger, 1.5-megawatt turbine, 65-metres in height, was built between Blood Hill and Martham in 2000 and is owned by Ecotricity. The windfarm is clearly visible from the edge of Martham and the roads linking the village to the coast, but the flat landscape results in buildings obscuring the smaller turbines from most vantage points within the village itself.

Plate 4.11: Blood Hill Windfarm and single turbine (2013). Photo taken from the edge of Martham

From a review of local newspapers, planning documents and research interviews, it appears that, although no organised protest group existed, a notable amount of local controversy was provoked by the windfarm, with objections from some local residents and Borough Councillors. Articles in the Eastern Daily Press around the time of the windfarm's construction reported a mix of local opinion and included positive and negative headlines, from "Backing for windfarm attacked" (Eastern Daily Press, 1992b) to "Bright idea in the wind" (Eastern Daily Press, 1992a). Following the windfarm's construction, there were a number of complaints from the neighbouring village of Winterton-on-Sea about disruption to television signals, but this issue was subsequently resolved by the windfarm operator. According to one article, when it was first built the windfarm drew in coachloads of 'windfarm tourists' who "flocked to see"

the novel structures (Eastern Daily Press, 1993), which were the first in Norfolk. There are now eight separate operational wind projects in the county (see Table 4.2), including two large-scale offshore windfarms; the nearest of which is the Scroby Sands offshore windfarm at Great Yarmouth.

4.4 Conclusion

The villages introduced here are all located in landscapes typically thought of as rural and scenic. Physical changes, such as the introduction of windfarms or other non-'natural' structures, might, therefore, simplistically be expected to elicit similar attitudes in each village, particularly with regards to their perceived in/congruence with their surroundings (see 2.4.2). However, as the descriptions above indicate, each place has significantly varying socio-historical contexts. The research thus sought to be attentive to these particularities, revealing them to have important implications for understanding responses to change; as Chapters Six to Ten will demonstrate. Furthermore, the landscape characteristics and specificities involved in the windfarm developments, along with the case studies' wider regional contexts, were identified as influential over how perceptions of these structures were shaped (see 10.5). On the other hand, the case studies' (typically rural) similarities, in terms of demographics and relative removal from centres of economic activity, resulted in shared findings being identified - particularly regarding evaluations of 'community' and perceptions of social change (see Chapter Seven).

The use of a three-case-study approach is deemed to have been valuable in yielding rich and meaningful findings. Before these are explored, however, Chapter Five will discuss the specific methodology used for the research.

Chapter 5. Research design and methodology

5.1 Introduction

The fieldwork for this research was carried out over three one-month periods in October 2012 (Mullion), April 2013 (Askam and Ireleth) and September 2014 (Martham). These extended visits enabled me to 'get a feel for' the places and engage with them on a personal and everyday basis. Immersing myself in the research settings enabled me to stay alert to local goings-on and attend 'community' events and meetings, such as a coffee morning in Mullion; a History Group talk in Askam and Ireleth; and an 'Old Folks club' lunch in Martham. These occasions offered an insight into some of the social practices taking place in each village and provided a deeper understanding of local particularities such as the past and present socio-economic contexts and current community initiatives and controversies.

A wider view of each place was also sought prior to and during the fieldwork by reviewing place-related materials such as books, community leaflets and websites, tourist information and local newspapers. Local newspaper and planning archives were also consulted to gauge local responses to the windfarms at the time of their planning and construction (or at least how these were reported). This wider understanding provided important context for understanding people-place relationships and served as a platform from which to engage with participants and interpret the research findings.

The analytical approach taken is a distinctly inductive one, where the findings have emerged from conversations with participants (see 5.4). The methodology is designed to facilitate genuine induction as far as possible by removing some of the constraints of traditional, formal and structured interviews and by allowing insights from multiple theoretical approaches to be considered. These principles led to the selection of

qualitative interviewing that attends to the oral histories of rural residents as the primary research method. As 5.2 and 5.3 explain, this method was considered most suitable for drawing out participants' perceptions and experiences and for exploring the temporal notions of rural place and landscape that are of interest to the research. The interviews were conducted in each case study via a combination of walking and indoor 'emplaced' techniques, which were integral in eliciting rich information and facilitating inductive analysis.

This chapter discusses this approach in more detail and explains why it was considered to be most appropriate for meeting the research aims. It begins with a brief discussion of the use and value of oral history techniques within geographical research, before discussing the emplaced and mobile nature of the interviews. Next, 5.4 introduces the particular design and format of the interviews and 5.5 discusses the data processing and analysis strategies. Ethical issues relating to the research are then considered in 5.6.

5.2 Exploring place and change through oral (hi)stories

Intensive interviews were chosen as the primary method for the research because they provide a way of exploring and explaining events and experiences in their full complexity (Hoggart et al., 2002). They are thus suitable for addressing the multifaceted, intricate and nuanced themes and relationships that form the focus of this thesis. The research employs the narratives of individuals living in the three case study villages to explore their experiences of place and of how it has changed over the time they have known it. These narratives can be said to take the form of oral histories, as the interviews were designed to facilitate and engage with the spoken accounts of participants' pasts and presents. Oral history can be described as a 'human document'; an account "of individual experience which reveal[s] the individual's actions as a human

agent and as a participant in social life" (Plummer, 2001, p.3). Although the term oral *history* may imply a backward-looking approach to researching the past, I use it more loosely here to refer to people's accounts of their present-day experiences of place, as well as their stories about its past, which, in the case of newer residents, may only extend back a few years. Oral narratives, or (hi)stories, are used in the research because they provide insights into personal and affective relationships with place and into how people make sense of their past and use it to interpret their lives in the present (Perks & Thompson, 2006). Such processes are central to understanding responses to place change, but are unlikely to be revealed by more detached or 'objective' methods. The ability of oral histories to reveal past experiences of place and (reported) changes in perceptions of it is thus particularly valuable for understanding and foregrounding the temporal elements of people-place relationships (research question 1).

Whilst oral history has long been used as a research method within the discipline of history, it is only relatively recently that it has been taken up with any great fervour within geography (Andrews et al., 2006; Riley, 2010). This is perhaps surprising given geography's interest in the relationship between people and place, as oral history offers a way of exploring such relationships in reference to both the past and present. Oral history techniques were dismissed in the past for being subjective and unreliable (Grele, 1998), but the move away from positivist approaches has facilitated a fresh engagement with the personal narratives of people who have experienced places and events first-hand (Andrews et al., 2006; Bailey & Biggs, 2012; Lorimer, 2003; Riley & Harvey, 2007).

The spoken nature of oral history research makes it suitable for exploring the narratives of a wide range of people, not just notable public figures or those equipped or inclined enough to record their experiences in written form. It thus facilitates pluri-vocality by offering a way of hearing voices that may not be included in more positivist approaches

to documenting history, thereby allowing traditional accounts to be seen from new perspectives (Jones & Fowler, 2007). It is now recognised that oral history is particularly suited to geographical research because it provides a way of attending to the construction of place identities, place attachments and place memories, and to the everyday features and practices that are less remarked on, but nevertheless important, in understandings of place (Andrews et al., 2006). Given this thesis' interest in the temporal nature of relationships with place and change, oral history is particularly appropriate because it reveals how perceptions of the past are implicated in present-day experiences. Such an approach also recognises "memory's critical importance in defining a sense of self in a spatial and temporal frame" (Tolia-Kelly, 2004, p.314).

Traditionally, oral accounts of the past have also been looked on sceptically because of a belief that memories tend to be overly nostalgic, selective and open to being unconsciously re-worked or manipulated over time (Cubitt, 2007; Said, 2000). However, whilst memories may not always be strictly 'accurate' in a positivist sense, attending to them remains a valuable exercise, as it is the subjectivity of experience that is the chief focus here. The memories tell us about "how some features of the past exist as a current cultural representation" (Andrews et al., 2006, p.166) and reveal something of the non-representational in engagements with place (Jones, 2005; 2011). Thus, whilst many anecdotes told by interviewees were indeed nostalgic and potentially overly-positive, they offered an invaluable insight into their emotional attachments to place and personal perceptions of change.

5.3 Emplaced and mobile interviews

This research aims to explore the experiential elements of orientation to place, as well as socially constructed aspects. But how people engage with place on an embodied, emotional level is, methodologically speaking, a challenging subject to tackle. Much

experience-focused work chooses to use techniques such as ethnography and auto-ethnography to attempt such descriptions (Latham, 2003). However, this does not always allow space for hearing the voices of residents themselves or for accessing *past* experiences (or at least memories of past experiences). Oral (hi)stories, as described above, offer one way of doing this, but encouraging people to articulate and share their personal feelings can be difficult, particularly when asking them to think about topics they may not have previously given much thought. Creating a relaxed atmosphere within a meaningful setting that facilitated an immediate engagement with the topics being discussed was, therefore, an important consideration in the interview design.

Whilst traditional approaches to geographical research once advocated neutrality, convenience and consistency in interview settings (Elwood & Martin, 2000), there is growing recognition that attending to the location in which interviews (or other research methods) take place is important (Anderson, 2004; Andrews et al., 2006; Elwood & Martin, 2000; Holton & Riley, 2014; Riley, 2010; Sin, 2003). Since knowledge is always only ever partial and situated (Haraway, 1988, see also 5.6.1), the context in which it is created has a significant influence over its (co)construction. In a study such as this, where 'place' is at the centre of concern, it makes intuitive sense to conduct the interviews somewhere where participants have access to the people, places and artefacts they are discussing. Taking interviews into the environment that is being discussed is also likely to elicit a greater understanding of responses to place and landscape, as people require less prompting to talk about their relation to place (Evans & Jones, 2011; Holton & Riley, 2014) and can be provoked by the space itself to offer personal (hi)stories relating to it (Jones et al., 2008). This type of approach is, therefore, clearly valuable for meeting the research aims through examining people's past and present engagements with place.

With these concerns in mind, I sought to emplace the research encounter within the environment that was being discussed by offering participants the choice between talking to me in a meaningful indoor setting, or whilst walking around the village or surrounding countryside. Consequently, approximately one third of the interviews across the three case studies were undertaken as walking interviews and the remaining two thirds as interviews that, whilst indoors, were nevertheless 'emplaced' in terms of being held in settings that were relevant to the discussion and/or important to the participant in some way.

Most of the indoor interviews were held in participants' homes, although some were held in their workplaces and others in village cafes. As familiar sites, these provided participants with particular cues that would not have been present in a 'neutral' or unfamiliar environment. For instance, an interview conducted in a café at Mullion Cove inevitably included discussion about the appeal of the coast and the participant's family history of fishing from the harbour. Similarly, during a number of interviews in people's homes, participants would refer to things such as the view from their window, or break the conversation to hunt out photographs that enfolded meaningful social memories. The emplaced nature of the interviews was thus essential for drawing out the nuances of people's relationships with place and narratives of change, as it facilitated a more fruitful consideration (by both researcher and interviewee) of past and present experiences.

Mobile methods have recently started to attract more attention and have been taken up in various formats, including go-alongs (Kusenbach, 2003; Middleton & Yarwood, 2013) and walking interviews (Brown & Durrheim, 2009; Holton & Riley, 2014; Jones et al., 2008). Walking interviews were used in this research for their particular ability to gain insights into the affective, emotional and embodied aspects of relationships with place and landscape (Anderson, 2004; Riley, 2010). Walking interviews hold potential for recognising, working with and reflecting the way in which "people, including

researchers, are…embodied and situated, interacting with the world as multi-sensory, emotional and physical beings" (Bailey & Biggs, 2012, p.3). For instance, I was able to gain an insight into people's interactions with their surroundings by being aware of their body language and sharing the experience of walking with them. Their pauses at particular points during the walk, their focus of visual attention, and the way they interacted with people along the way, all helped to build a general (though inevitably partial) picture of the everyday social relations and embodied practices that made up their experience of place (Riley, 2010). The act of walking has also been argued to elicit a stronger engagement with the landscape in question (Evans & Jones, 2011) and create a more relaxed atmosphere than seated interviews, thereby helping the conversation flow more naturally, thereby reducing the awkwardness of silent gaps and giving both the respondent and researcher time to consider what is being said (Riley, 2010).

As well as being chosen for their ability to explore aspects of people's relationship with place (research question 1), emplaced and mobile methods offered a promising way of investigating ideas surrounding non-'natural' objects in rural landscape (question 2) and attitudes towards the local windfarm (question 3). For the walking interviews in particular, being situated in the landscape in question and having immediate visual references to such structures close-to-hand often prompted participants to give a more detailed and considered discussion about their views than they may otherwise have done (Evans & Jones, 2011). This benefit was also present, to some extent, in my emplaced indoor interviews, as these locations provided visual views or access to image-based representations of vistas or features, which were referred to in the discussions and were entwined with people's opinions about windfarms and other distinctly societal structures.

Giving interviewees an element of control over the length, location and (in the case of the walking interviews) route of interviews is beneficial because it enables the

participants to retain an element of power over the interview process and creates the conditions for a more democratic co-construction of knowledge (Holton & Riley, 2014). Offering a choice also meant that I was able to gain some of the unique advantages of walking interviews without excluding those people who, for whatever reason, were reluctant or unable to walk during the interview. Arguably, a weakness of this approach is that the interviewees might discuss different elements of place and change depending on the indoor or outdoor setting, with implications for analysing and comparing the data. For instance, Evans and Jones (2011) found that walking interviews tended to elicit more information about specific buildings and environmental features, whilst sedentary interviews focused more on people. Indeed, this finding was reflected in my own results, as the conversations which took place outside tended to focus more on how the village space was used and on the surrounding landscape, compared to the indoor interviews, which focused more on perceptions of community and sociality within the village. However, this is not a significant drawback in this case, as both the social and physical elements of people's relationship with place and experiences of change are of interest to the research. I also found both interview formats valuable for facilitating a good rapport and eliciting rich data.

There are some difficulties with an emplaced approach to interviewing, principally in terms of practicalities. The walking interviews were particularly susceptible to disruption from external factors, such as not being able to make clear audio recordings due to excessive background noise from wind or traffic. The constant movement of participants around and away from the hand-held voice-recorder also made some parts of the interview recordings inaudible, resulting on me relying on memory to transcribe some sections. Writing up transcripts as soon as possible after particularly problematic recordings and taking detailed notes in a field-diary was, therefore, important to retain information as fully and accurately as possible.

Despite the practical difficulties they caused, the weather and other background factors actually formed an integral element of the interviews, as they contributed to the embodied nature of the encounter and often formed topics of discussion themselves. Similarly, whilst both the indoor and outdoor interviews were liable to being interrupted by other household members or chance meetings with friends and neighbours, these interruptions were valuable. Often, family members who were busy in the background 'chipped in' to support or clarify certain points made by the interviewee, and people we met along the walking routes were curious about who I was and what we were doing; leading them to share their own thoughts on the topic. As Riley (2010) has argued, such interruptions serve to 'bring in' the voices of people who may not be willing to be 'interviewed' themselves and who would not, therefore, usually be heard.

5.4 Interview design

5.4.1 Interview format and procedure

In order to explore temporal aspects of people-place relationships, participants were asked to discuss how they felt about the place where they lived and to consider how it had changed over time. The resulting conversations focused on a range of topics, such as their personal and (where applicable) family history associated with the place; their opinions about the village's 'sense of community' and involvement in 'community' activities; how they felt about the village's on-going growth (both in terms of population and housing numbers); their perceptions of social change in the village; and their thoughts and feelings about the local windfarm. Those taking part in walking interviews were asked to lead a short walk to, or via, sites that were particularly important to them in some way; they liked or disliked; and/or that show aspects of the place and landscape that have changed. Participants were allowed to choose the length and route of the walk, which enriched the data by allowing them to highlight the places and

views that were important to them. Maps showing the routes taken can be found in Appendix B.

Given that people's experiences and perceptions of place, landscape and change are especially complex, variable and context-dependent, an unstructured and inductive approach to interviewing was taken. Potential questions/prompts were considered in advance (see Appendix C), but no pre-determined interview schedule was employed and no single theoretical or analytical framework was used to frame the questions. This explicitly non-prescriptive approach helped to minimise influencing participants' narratives and allowed for a more inductive assessment of the relative significance of different aspects of place and change to individuals. As Cloke et al. (2004) argue, whilst interview preparation is essential, being flexible, intuitive and listening with sensitivity to what is being said is key to facilitating 'dramaturgical spontaneity' and a fruitful interview. In contrast, "a mechanical trudging through of an interview checklist or schedule by the researcher will restrict possibilities for interpersonal drama, and therefore of plot development" (Cloke et al., 2004, p.155). Thus, although some amount of guidance was needed on my part to ensure research topics were covered and aims fulfilled, to a large extent, I allowed the participant to lead the direction of the conversation according to what they felt was most important or meaningful to discuss.

Avoiding over-influencing the direction of the conversation was particularly important in relation to the third research question regarding attitudes to windfarms and how they do or do not become incorporated into place identities and attachments. Although windfarms were a particular focus of the research, I wished to avoid imposing this interest on the participants' narratives or assuming the windfarm to be a prominent place-related feature or issue for them. I, therefore, did not raise the topic early in the conversation, but instead waited to see whether the subject naturally emerged. This aspect of the study was also not emphasised when recruiting participants, but was included as just one example of the changes that I was interested in. This approach

avoided targeting, or being led to, only those residents with strong opinions about windfarms, and helped include those with more ambivalent attitudes. Although there were some issues related to this approach (see 5.6.3), it was successful in enabling a range of perspectives about windfarms to be explored. As a result, the research is able to make a valuable contribution to understanding more positive and ambivalent perspectives regarding windfarms. Ellis et al. (2007) argue that these have been overlooked in the renewable energy literature due to an ideological bias that posits windfarms as unquestionably 'good' and leads researchers to focus solely on identifying reasons for opposition with the purpose of overcoming such barriers.

The unstructured and informal nature of the interviews, along with the flexible and emplaced approach described in 5.3, mean they might be more suitably described as 'conversational encounters' (Wood & Kroger, 2000) than formal interviews. Partly due to this flexible and relaxed approach, interview lengths varied from fifteen minutes to five hours, although most were in the one- to two-hour range. Whilst this had the disadvantage of sometimes producing large amounts of superfluous data that made transcription and analysis time-consuming, like de Wit (2012), I found that I was able to manage this better as the fieldwork progressed and that the richness of data gathered from the longer interviews justified the extra time they demanded.

5.4.2 Research participants

A wholly representative sample was not sought within each of the villages because, as Valentine (2005, p.111) argues, "the aim of an interview is *not* to be representative (a common but mistaken criticism of this technique) but to understand how individual people experience and make sense of their own lives". As discussed in 4.2., the research is interested in obtaining in-depth insights into personal experiences and perspectives rather than attempting to make statistical generalisations, so representativeness is not of key concern. However, an attempt was made to obtain a

range of participants in terms of age, background and the length of time they had lived in the area in order to gather an illustrative range of perspectives and maximise the pluri-vocal nature of the research. This was partially, but not wholly, successful and I discuss the reasons for, and implications of, this in 5.4.3.

Research participants were identified through a mixture of using 'gatekeepers' (Cloke et al., 2004), 'stratified snowballing' (de Wit, 2012), 'advertising' and opportunistically approaching individuals within each of the villages. As part of the case study selection process, I had contacted a number of parish councils regarding the research and received positive responses from the Mullion, Askam and Ireleth and Martham parish councils, who expressed their interest in, and support for, the project and assigned a parish council member to liaise with me and help identify potential participants. This provided preliminary points of contact and made it easier to recruit initial volunteers, as the approach was made by someone they knew and trusted. The parish councils thus acted as key gatekeepers in facilitating the research. By using the snowballing technique (asking participants to help identify other potential volunteers), I was then able to expand the scope of participants further. Additional gatekeepers were also identified in the form of major community groups, such as the Women's Institute (Askam), 'Old Folk's Club' (Martham) and Methodist church (Mullion). The local history groups in each of the villages proved to be particularly helpful by sharing their archival information and identifying potential participants.

In addition to the use of gatekeepers, a leaflet and poster introducing myself and the research (see Appendix D) was placed around each village on notice boards and in shops and community centres. I also posted about the research on relevant online social media sites (e.g. the Martham and Askam and Ireleth community Facebook pages) and, where possible, secured articles in local newsletters, parish council websites and newspapers. Although these 'advertisements' did not directly lead to many recruits (only one or two in each place), on approaching potential participants

many people recalled seeing them, which added a sense of credibility to the request and made it easier to secure their participation. In Mullion, where there is a strong culture of local art, a number of artists detailed in the local 'Mullion Guide' were also contacted. This resulted in three interviews with people who were outside of the main 'community' groups and who had particularly interesting and considered perspectives on the local place and landscape. Finally, some participants (five in Mullion, two in Askam and three in Martham) were recruited through striking up conversations with people in public places and approaching people working in local shops and businesses. This mix of approaches helped to widen the type of people who were interviewed and, to a certain extent, avoid the risk of bias from 'community boosterism' (de Wit, 2012), which can result from relying on people (such as parish council members) who may have a particular interest in portraying a positive view of the place or favouring discussion (or avoidance) of particular issues. This was not wholly possible, however, and there were some other issues associated with the recruitment process and participant sample, which could not be entirely addressed. These are detailed in 5.4.3.

In total, seventy-eight interviews were undertaken across the three case study sites: twenty-five in Mullion, twenty-six in Askam and twenty-seven in Martham. Of these, twenty-eight were conducted as walking interviews and the remaining fifty as indoor interviews. These figures refer to individuals but, in practice, several interviews took place collectively. Twelve people were interviewed with their partner, eight with their parent/child, two with their grandparent/grandchild and thirteen in pairs/groups of friends or acquaintances (one group of four, one group of three and three groups of two). This collective interviewing could be considered problematic, as it is open to some of the difficulties encountered in the use of focus groups; namely that people behave differently in groups and the presence of other individuals is feared to negatively influence the openness of participants, who may feel reluctant to contest the views of their friends and family (Hoggart et al., 2002). Whilst an element of this is likely

to be present in my own sample – particularly regarding controversial topic areas such as windfarms – it did not appear to be a significant issue, with collectively-interviewed participants frequently disagreeing with or correcting each other. Nevertheless, the issue should not be dismissed and being alert to these possibilities during analysis was important. There are, however, also advantages to this technique. The collective interviews yielded some of the richest information about people's memories, experiences and perceptions of the place and how it had changed, as participants frequently picked up on what their co-interviewee said and elaborated or contested the point (Hoggart et al., 2002). The presence of familiar individuals is also likely to have helped participants feel at ease and contributed to the relaxed and fruitful interview atmosphere.

5.4.3 Sample representativeness

The recruitment strategy described above was reasonably successful at obtaining a variety of perspectives. However, there are some issues of bias in the sample. The sample lacked diversity in terms of ethnicity, as all participants were White-British, although, as noted in 4.2, this is representative of the villages' wider population. The gender balance in the sample is also relatively similar to the wider populations, although with a slight bias towards females. The male to female ratio of participants was 44:56 in Mullion, 42:58 in Askam and 52:48 in Martham, compared to the village population ratios of 48:52, 50:50 and 48:52 respectively.

In terms of age and residence length, there was a general bias towards older and longer-residing participants in each case study (see Tables 5.1 to 5.3). To a certain extent, the age bias is reflective of the older than average demographic of all three case studies (particularly Martham and Mullion, see Fig. 4.2), but it is also likely to result from the self-selecting nature of the sample, as older residents may have more time for (and potentially more interest in) the research. The bias towards longer-term

residents highlights one of the weaknesses of the snowballing technique, as my expressed interest in the place and its change over time inadvertently led most participants to direct me towards individuals who were thought to have most knowledge of the place by virtue of their long-term residence there and who were, therefore, assumed to be of most help to the research. Efforts to explain that I was also interested in the thoughts of newer residents, and to identify such people through the other recruitment approaches, were only partially successful.

Table 5.1: Number of participants by age and length of residence - Mullion

Age (years) / Length of residence (years)	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 or over	Total
0 to 5		1		1	1			**3**
6 to 10			1		1	2		**4**
11 to 20			2	1	1	2		**6**
21 to 40		1	1*		2	1		**5**
41 to 60						1	1	**2**
61 or over					1	3	1	**5**
Total		**2**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**9**	**2**	

*Includes 1 returnee[4]

Table 5.2: Number of participants by age and length of residence – Askam & Ireleth

Age (years) / Length of residence (years)	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 or over	Total
0 to 5			1					**1**
6 to 10								**0**
11 to 20	2			1				**3**
21 to 40		2		1	2	1		**6**
41 to 60				3*	4*	1		**8**
61 or over						4*	4	**8**
Total	**2**	**2**	**1**	**5**	**6**	**6**	**4**	

*Includes 1 returnee

[4] 'Returnees' are classified as people who grew up in the area but have lived elsewhere for a substantial period. Their 'length of residence' refers to the time that they have known the village (i.e. since they first lived there), rather than strictly the number of years spent there.

Table 5.3: Number of participants by age and length of residence - Martham

Age (years) / Length of residence (years)	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 or over	Total
0 to 5					1			**1**
6 to 10			1		2		1	**4**
11 to 20			1	1		1		**3**
21 to 40	1	1			1	1		**4**
41 to 60			1	3		1	1	**6**
61 or over						4*	5*	**9**
Total	**1**	**1**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**7**	**7**	

*Includes 1 returnee

This is not considered to be acutely problematic because the interviews sought to understand personal place-meanings, perceptions and experiences, which are distinctly personal – an aim for which representativeness is, to some extent, irrelevant (de Wit, 2012; Valentine, 2005). There is also a potential advantage to the age bias, as the narratives of older people provide particular richness by offering a longer-term perspective on the historical context of place and change (Andrews et al., 2006). However, the bias in the sample does clearly have some implications, as older people with a longer association with the place may be more likely to have a strong attachment to it (Lewicka, 2011a) and may view change in a different light to newer or younger residents. People at different stages of their life course also have different needs, various experiences of rural life and are, therefore, likely to prioritise issues differently[5]. This will have implications for (for example) the emphasis they put on different aspects of place and landscape; their relative perceptions of 'nature' and technology; and the ways they balance perceived pros and cons of windfarms.

Perhaps of more concern is the likelihood for the findings to reflect the views of a particular section of 'the community' in each village due to the self-selecting nature of

[5] See Bailey & Biggs (2012); Heley & Jones (2013); Joseph & Chalmers (1995) for explorations of older people's experiences of rural place.

the sample. Those most willing to volunteer to participate are generally likely to be people who have an active interest in the place, landscape and/or community (and are thus more likely to take an interest in the research), who will usually have a positive opinion about the area (de Wit, 2012). Those less enamoured with the place or less involved in 'community' circles are perhaps less likely to hear about or participate in the research. Indeed, it was difficult to recruit interviewees outside the social groups of the gatekeepers. Relying too heavily on community groups for recruiting participants is also problematic because these groups tend to have social biases themselves. For instance, parish councils do not necessarily represent the whole community, as they tend to be dominated by middle-class residents and can be used to further elite interests (Hoggart & Henderson, 2005; Sturzaker, 2010; Tewdwr-Jones, 1998; Yarwood, 2002).

With this in mind, a particular effort was made to approach different groups and individuals. The interviews and snatched conversations with people I met (for example) in the Martham Children's Centre, the Mullion Post Office and local shops and businesses became, therefore, particularly important in order to corroborate or contradict the general sense of place conveyed by other interviewees. The 'stratified snowballing' technique also helped represent people not directly involved in community groups and, although information was not specifically gathered on participants' socio-economic status, a review of their known occupations[6] indicates that a reasonable mix of backgrounds was achieved. However, the technique was not necessarily successful in reaching those less linked into the social networks of the village or those with views that radically differed from those of the initial interviewees. So whilst direct "community boosterism" (de Wit, 2012, p.126) by gatekeepers with a vested interest in presenting the place positively was, on the whole, avoided, an element of social desirability bias

[6] Participant occupations include (in no particular order); builder, butcher, baker, full-time parent, minister, engineer, administrator, site maintenance worker, stonemason, parish council clerk, receptionist, community support worker, commercial officer, student, business owner, farmer, fisher, publican, artist, chartered surveyor, teacher, teaching assistant, prison education officer, postmaster and countryside ranger.

within the sample is likely to remain. This is an important consideration when interpreting the research findings but, since the aim is to explore personal understandings of place and change, it does not detract from the validity of the results in this regard.

5.5 Data processing and analysis

An inductive or 'bottom-up' approach to analysis begins with detailed observations and works 'upwards' to identify patterns and move towards more abstract generalisations, concepts or theories (Neuman, 2011). This thesis employs inductive reasoning because it is not seeking to demonstrate or 'test' an existing idea but to explore meanings in an open-ended manner (Thomas, 2006). Inductive analysis is also appropriate for meeting the research aims because, although (as reviewed in Chapters Two and Three) the multiple themes of place, landscape, rurality and nature have all been extensively theorised within the social sciences, they are drawn together here and applied to questions of rural change - so whilst the analysis was informed by these theoretical debates, it was not guided by any single model. Although the adaptation and use of a conceptual or theoretical framework (namely Halfacree's (2006a) threefold model of rural place) was considered, this option was rejected to avoid attempting to 'fit' findings into a framework's categories, instead allowing themes to emerge unrestricted from the data (Corbin, 2008). Such an approach is less likely to 'miss' key themes that lie outside of the guiding framework or to unintentionally reinforce its preconceptions (Thomas, 2006).

In line with the research questions, the goal of the data analysis was to identify emerging themes and patterns in the accounts of rural residents about i) their relationships with place, landscape and changes to these (and particularly the role of the past in shaping such relationships); ii) their conceptualisations of technology,

'nature' and heritage in relation to material structures in the rural landscape; and iii) their attitude towards the existing local windfarm. This was very much an iterative process involving ongoing analysis throughout the research process. I begin by explaining how the interview data was captured, recorded and processed.

The majority of the interviews were recorded using a hand-held digital voice recorder and subsequently fully transcribed. Though the use of a voice recorder may result in participants being less candid in their accounts (Hoggart et al., 2002), the overriding advantage is that it enables the researcher to focus on the conversation and listen attentively without being distracted or breaking the flow by taking notes (Valentine, 2005). Six interviewees were not recorded – one at the interviewee's request, one due to a technical error with the recorder, and four (collectively interviewed as one) because the interview arose spontaneously and the recorder's memory was full. On these occasions, detailed notes were made either at the time or immediately afterwards in order to capture as many of the salient points as possible.

The interviews were transcribed in full and word-for-word, initially including pauses and conversational tangents as well as 'um's and 'er's. These hesitations and difficulties in articulation were indicative of the 'performance' element of the narratives and of interviewees' thought-processes and were thus seen as potentially revealing in themselves (Elliott, 2005; Wood & Kroger, 2000). Employing minimal editing also helped avoid introducing another layer of interpretation onto the data. However, since the narrative function of these speech characteristics is not the key concern of the research, the quotes included in this thesis have on occasion been 'tidied up' to make them more coherent and accessible, as everyday speech does not always 'read well' (de Wit, 2012; Elliott, 2005).

The principal element of analysis was a qualitative interrogation of the interview data using an inductive and iterative approach, loosely resonant with the principles of

Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This involved multiple detailed and critical re-readings and explorations of the data in order to progressively narrow-down the focus and identify meaningful patterns and themes (Corbin, 2008). To assist with this process, the computer software package NVivo was used as a tool for organising the data. Having re-familiarised myself with the interview data through transcribing and re-reading, I coded the material, grouping it into a number of descriptive categories according to the topics and themes that were discussed (e.g. 'windfarm'; 'landscape and health'; 'housing development'). Initially, this was a relatively unstructured and arbitrary process resulting in a number of 'codes' that were not necessarily useful to the final findings. This type of process, referred to as 'open coding', recognises that exploratory and potentially temporary codes are useful for 'opening up' the data (Strauss, 1987). It also serves to organise and un-pick the data, making particular sections easier to refer to and enabling emerging themes and relationships to be investigated through further coding.

A field-diary, which detailed my reflections and experiences of being in the case study places, was also used to develop, corroborate and/or add depth to the findings (Hoggart et al., 2002). In reality, however, a certain amount of data analysis occurred not just on fieldwork completion, but throughout the research process, as I was alert to interesting themes and insights arising during the interviews. This influenced the follow-up questions that I asked and helped shape the form of future interviews, as I sought to confirm or contradict such observations. Although beginning from a purely inductive starting-point, the data gathering and analysis was thus an iterative process (Cope, 2010). The process of writing up the findings also contributed to the conceptualisation and 'sense making' (Schiellerup, 2008) of the research data.

This inductive analysis was effective at drawing out the meaningful themes discussed in this thesis, but a weakness of the approach is that open coding is time-consuming and can be overwhelming at times (Schmidt, 2004). It is also an inevitably subjective

process that relies on the researcher's personal interpretation of the data (Cope, 2010). The use of multiple 'coders' in analysing the data may have added strength to the interpretations by enabling comparison, corroboration and negotiation between different interpretations (Cope, 2010) but, unfortunately, was not possible in this study. The influence of my positionality in interpreting the results is thus particularly important to reflect on, as discussed in 5.6.1.

5.6 Ethical issues

Ethical approval by Plymouth University was secured for the project and included conditions that were fully adhered to. However, all research is affected by ethical issues, which do not necessarily have a 'right' solution but need to be identified and negotiated as far as possible (Cloke et al., 2004; Hay, 2010; Hoggart et al., 2002). Here, I acknowledge the key issues and limitations associated with the research and explain how they were mitigated.

5.6.1 Knowledge, power and positionality

There are a number of ethical considerations and issues regarding knowledge construction, power and positionality within the research process. Acknowledging and reflecting on these is essential for understanding and considering the nature and validity of outputs arising from research interviews.

The nature of 'knowledge' has been widely debated. It is now generally recognised that knowledge can only ever be partial and situated and that objectivity is impossible to achieve (Haraway, 1988; MacKian, 2010; Rose, 1997; Valentine, 2005). In the interview context, interviewers are implicated in the construction of meanings to the extent that the resulting data should be seen as essentially collaborative (Cloke et al., 2004). As Wood and Kroger (2000, p.72) explain, discourse is continuously in the

making; “answers that are produced in the interaction are not simply ‘there’, waiting to be elicited; they may never have been produced before that moment”.

The particular manner of this production is influenced by both interviewer and interviewee, but the researcher inevitably holds a certain amount of power over the research encounter, thereby influencing the knowledge that is constructed and the manner in which participants’ voices are presented. The academic discourses and processes that underlie the research form part of this power imbalance but are, for the most part, hidden (though unintentionally) from the participant. As Jane Bailey writes in her research diary:

> “These conversational exchanges have the appearance of an everyday, ‘friendly chat’, but they are also powerfully framed by academic institutions and discourses, including those of Ethics Committees, disciplinary demarcations, funding schedules, etc. Personal expectations, assumptions and life situations…are also brought to the exchange by both those taking part”
>
> (Bailey & Biggs, 2012, p.5).

Although issues of power cannot be entirely avoided, efforts were made to help redress some of the imbalances. As discussed in 5.3, the flexible approach to interview style, location and length gave participants the opportunity to retain some power over the research process. Asking the interviewee to choose the interview’s location empowered all participants to some extent (Elwood & Martin, 2000) and the walking-interviewees’ ability to choose the route enabled them to help shape the conversation’s focus and exert more (though still limited) power over the interview process than traditional approaches (Brown & Durrheim, 2009; Riley, 2010). The conversational style also meant that participants were more likely to feel comfortable and able to ask me about my own background and experiences. Offering information about myself helped create a more (but not wholly) balanced and reciprocal situation.

Despite these measures, I retain considerable power over how conversations were interpreted, analysed, and written about. As Cloke et al. (2004, p.151) explain, interviews are valuable for the inclusion of lay discourses within academic writing, as they allow a range of different voices to be heard, "but the 'voices' that are heard are still subject to editorial concerns of research and the interpersonal drama of the interview itself". The researcher thus retains 'narrative privilege' over how accounts are interpreted and represented (Adams, 2008). This is perhaps even more pertinent when considering interview methods, such as the ones employed here, that attempt to consider the experiential aspects of people's lives and engagements with their environment. Ultimately, in an interview or conversation situation, a participant's description of how they feel can only be expressed in words (and to a certain extent body language, but this is more difficult to record and interpret), which are already a representation. The description thus may not wholly reflect the person's emotions and embodied experiences, particularly if they find it difficult to articulate their feelings verbally. My interpretation of the meanings within what they say can also only be just that - an interpretation - and is likely to be influenced by my own background, views and purposes.

Recognition of my positionality and how it affects the research encounter is, therefore, important (Valentine, 2005). Feminist geographers in particular have shown how personal characteristics such as the researcher's age, gender, class and values can influence the way in which participants respond to them and, consequently, the knowledge that is produced, as well as inevitably affecting how the data is interpreted and analysed (England, 1994; Rose, 1997). My identity as a white, female, middle-class, relatively young academic, and an 'outsider' to the community, will have influenced the interactions that I had with participants in multiple ways. It is impossible to determine how people variously perceived me during the research encounter and how this affected their responses, but assumptions based on these characteristics may have been made regarding aspects of my interest, knowledge and understanding

(Valentine, 2005). For instance, being an 'outsider' and an academic perceived to be making certain judgements about the place may have excluded me from certain situations and discouraged people from divulging some thoughts and feelings. I was also conscious of other aspects of my background coming into play. During our discussions on rural place, several participants enquired into my own place-of-origin with the apparent aim of determining whether I was a 'town' or 'country' person. The fact that I grew up in a rural village in Devon appeared to be beneficial in some cases, as it reassured people (rightly or wrongly) that I understood some of the issues, change-processes and values affecting rural areas. On the other hand, urban-migrants might have assumed this meant I had certain preconceptions about how the countryside should be valued and used, which they may have been reluctant to contest (though my current residence in the city of Exeter probably helped mitigate this).

My personal identities discussed here will also have shaped the way in which I conducted and analysed the research (Cloke et al., 2004). In the context of this study, it is particularly important to acknowledge that my own experiences and ideas about landscape, views about windfarms, and academic conceptualisation of place are likely to have unintentionally influenced the manner in which questions were asked and the data interpreted. My own, largely positive, views about windfarms are perhaps those most likely to introduce bias into the research analysis, although I believe that my genuine scepticism and empathy about some of the related issues limited this bias to a certain extent. I remained cognisant of my own reactions to situations that occurred during the fieldwork and recording my thoughts in a field diary helped identify and constrain any biases linked to these (Valentine, 2005). I was also surprised at how few participants asked me about my own views. I responded openly and honestly to those that did, but the general lack of curiosity meant that my own opinions had limited impact on the research encounter itself (though still influenced the questions I asked and the analysis I subsequently applied). The use of multiple and unfamiliar case study sites also reduced the likelihood of pre-conceived ideas affecting my interpretation.

5.6.2 Ground-truthing and reciprocity

One way of 'checking' the knowledge that is constructed during research and restoring some of the power imbalance is to 'member-check' the findings with research participants (Cope, 2010). Participants were, therefore, given the opportunity to view their interview transcript before it was used any further in the research, which added to participants' control over the research material. Several people took this opportunity and a few made minor corrections to (for example) misheard/spelt names and places. A small section was also removed from one of the transcripts on the interviewee's request, as on reflection they did not wish it to be included.

In each case study site, I also made a commitment to sharing the initial, high-level findings with the community, which provided an opportunity for participants to corroborate or contradict the interpretations that emerged from the interviews. After consulting with the parish councils on the best way in which to do this, I put together a short 'report' for each village that summarised key findings about people's perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of the village and their comments on how it had or had not changed. This report was shared with participants and the wider community, who were encouraged to send me further thoughts and comments on the subject and any feedback they had on the findings. In Mullion, I also held an 'open session' at the heritage centre, where I displayed a range of images and posters, as well as the report, and made myself available for questions and discussion. Unfortunately, practical constraints prevented similar sessions being held in Martham and Askam, but dialogue was encouraged via posts on online forums. This elicited limited response, however, and is an aspect that, given more time, could be improved upon by undertaking more community engagement activities (e.g. at local group meetings, carnivals and other events).

Sharing findings with, and inviting feedback from, the case study communities was also important to improve the reciprocity of the research by attempting to 'give something back'. The gatekeepers - especially the parish councils - expressed a particular interest in the feedback process, as they were keen to learn more about residents' views on the place and any concerns or issues they had. Askam and Ireleth Parish Council were particularly keen to learn about these to inform the development of their Neighbourhood Plan, which coincided with the research. In terms of participant reciprocity, interviewees appeared to appreciate having the opportunity to talk about their thoughts and experiences regarding their place of residence, with some explicitly stating that they had enjoyed taking part in the research (see de Wit, 2012, for a similar finding). A few also commented that the interview had made them appreciate the positive aspects of the place, which they usually took for granted. I do not claim that the power imbalance was entirely redressed, or that all participants universally 'got something out of' the research, but the general warmth and friendliness expressed immediately after the interviews provided reassurance that the process had been sufficiently ethically mindful.

5.6.3 Transparency

Transparency in presenting the research to potential participants is important to avoid accusations of deception and achieve informed consent (Hay, 2010). Participants were fully informed about what the interviews involved (including the risks; see Appendix E) before agreeing to take part in the research and were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time before project completion (see Appendices F and G for copies of the information and consent forms used). Participants were also assured of their anonymity in the research and their details have not been shared with anyone. All names used in this thesis are, therefore, pseudonyms.

In designing the research, I was particularly aware of one issue relating to transparency in the research method. As discussed in 5.4.1, although windfarms were a focus of the research, they were not presented as such, in order to first allow the participant to identify and talk about the changes that were most significant to them. This was revealing in itself, as the majority of participants made no mention of the windfarm until I introduced the topic later in the conversation (see 10.1.1). However, when designing the methodology, I initially felt uneasy about not explicitly focusing on the windfarm aspect in my explanation of the project aims to potential participants, as there is a risk that this approach could be construed as dishonest or misleading. To address this issue, I ensured that I included the windfarm as an example of the type of 'changes' that I was asking participants to think about. When participants asked (as they often did) why their particular village had been chosen as a case study, I also made it clear that the windfarm was one of the determining factors. I, therefore, sought to be honest and transparent without overly-influencing the topics of conversation.

Although some unease remains, this approach enabled a whole range of aspects and perceptions of place-relationships and place-change to be explored with participants (rather than discussions artificially focussing on the windfarm), which I believe has strengthened the depth and richness of the research findings. It also avoided a potential situation in recruiting participants whereby I could have been directed only towards people who were known to have a particular opinion about the windfarm. This would have diminished the quality of the research, as it would have excluded people who have ambivalent or resigned feelings about the windfarm – whose interviews turned out to be some of the most interesting and enlightening. The advantages of conducting the research in this way, together with the transparent inclusion of windfarms as an example of change within the study, thus serve to retain the ethical integrity of the study and ensure that it meets the principles of ethical research (Hay, 2010).

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the methods employed in this research and discussed some of the limitations and ethical issues associated with them. Recognition of these issues has helped to mitigate them where possible and identify weaknesses that needed to be taken into account when analysing the findings. Ultimately, however, it must be acknowledged that engaging with the research methods and data can only be done through particular lenses; reflexive awareness of this, whilst important, does not dissolve issues of power in the co-construction of knowledge (Hoggart et al., 2002).

I have explained how emplaced interviews, both indoor- and walking-, are appropriate for drawing out the oral (hi)stories of rural residents and exploring the complex and context-dependent themes and issues that are of interest to this research. This in-depth approach has resulted in a wealth of rich data, which has elicited valuable findings that will be discussed in the remainder of this thesis. Underlying all the research questions is a need to understand people's relationships with place and landscape and to foreground the temporal element of these. It is to this goal that Chapter Six now turns.

Chapter 6. Relationships with place and landscape: Understanding representations and personal experiences

6.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Three, relationships with place and landscape are complex and specific. In this chapter, I start to unpack and make sense of some of these complexities by examining the ways in which residents in the case study villages engage with the local place and landscape and how these are enrolled in constructions of rural identities. In particular, I draw out how the past is implicated in perceptions of place identity, as understanding interpretations of the temporality of place, landscape and 'nature' is an important precursor to exploring perceptions of change.

Whilst attachments to place may be partly or wholly negative (Manzo, 2003; 2005), the participants involved in my research generally spoke about the place where they live in positive terms. In many cases, the interviewees displayed a strong emotional attachment to their area of residence, expressing deep care for their village and the surrounding countryside. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three and conceptualised in Fig.3.1, place attachment bonds are variously constructed according to a combination of rural representations; personal experiences; social memories and practices; personal memories and embodied experiences (both of that and other places); and understandings of (post)nature. This chapter particularly focuses on the dialectical mix of two of these aspects – rural representations and personal experiences – and their relevance for understanding perceptions of temporality and change. As explained in Chapter Three, the various elements of place-perception are not simply discrete parts of a whole but are intricately interdependent, sometimes contradictory and continually transformative of each other. There are, therefore, inevitably overlaps between the themes discussed here and those addressed in later

chapters – namely the social memories and practices that help a community connect with its past and construct its present (see Chapter Seven) and understandings about (post)nature (Chapter Eight). In this chapter, I focus primarily on the material (rather than social) elements of place and landscape, which were of significance to participants and play an important role in shaping rural identities.

Sections 6.2 and 6.3 begin by discussing discursive ideas about 'nature' within constructions of rural place identity and presenting evidence of both 'timeless idyllic' and alternative conceptualisations of rural temporality within the interview accounts. Section 6.4 then focuses on the village of Mullion to demonstrate how social representations and personal experiences combine in understandings of rural place and how dominant popular discourses of rurality are variously interpreted according to regional and local contexts. Next, section 6.5 draws attention to the affective ability of place and landscape to conjure up meaningful personal memories, before 6.6 considers how landscapes and their affects are embodied and understood in relation to the self (and vice versa). Finally, section 6.7 explores the role of the weather-world in contributing to the landscape's affect and in shaping place identities. The potential implications of these findings for understanding responses to change are considered throughout.

This chapter helps set the context for subsequent discussions by establishing some of the ways in which place identities are constructed by residents. The findings reaffirm those of the wider literature, which, as discussed in Chapter Three, reveal the past to be an integral part of how places are understood and engaged with in the present (Crang & Travlou, 2001; Jones, 2011; Kearns & Philo, 1993; Laviolette & Baird, 2011; Massey, 1995; Setten, 2005). However, they also add to this literature by exploring these processes from the perspective of rural residents (i.e. through their own accounts) and by adding nuance to our understanding of how, in the rural context, the

experiential and the discursive combine in engagements with the temporal aspects of place.

6.2 Relational constructions of rurality and 'nature' in place identity

As previously discussed, pervasive Cartesian thinking in Western discourse tends to equate rurality with 'nature' and define it in relation to its binary opposite of urbanity (which is in turn equated with culture and society) (Castree, 2005; Halfacree, 1995; Woods, 2003b). As Chapter Eight shall discuss further, traces of such thinking were apparent within my interviews and highlighted the importance of 'nature' in the construction of rural identities.

The 'natural' landscape was spoken about by participants in all case studies as a primary attraction of living within the villages. Valuations of landscape features were often shared, with some areas thought to be particularly attractive and distinctive to the local area. For instance: the coastline (and particularly the area of Predannack) was felt to be particularly special by Mullion residents; the views over the Duddon estuary towards the Lake District were highly valued in Askam; and the Broads' flat landscape and 'big skies' were especially commented on in Martham. However, to some extent these distinctive features were conflated by more general references to the 'natural' and rural character of the place, highlighting this rural element as integral to place identity and defined in opposition to the urban.

Several participants emphasised their place of residence's positive aspects by comparing it to other places – either those they perceive to contrast these positive qualities, or to supposedly similar places that are considered more well-known. These relational constructions contain ideas about rurality and/or 'nature' within them, though sometimes implicitly:

> *"And the other place I loved was New Zealand. It's just such a beautiful place. That's like Martham really"* (Mark, Martham).

> *"I love living in Askam, it's just an awesome place. I've recently got back from Iceland and it's not that different to Askam, because it's all like coastal and windy"* (Naomi, Askam).

> *"And it's lovely, I was walking through the village yesterday and this elderly gentleman came towards me with a cap on and he touched his cap. Now you just don't get that in London"* (Sarah, Mullion).

> *"More personalised I suppose…And you notice that when you go to a city, like Lancaster, you notice, you can pick out definitely the fact that we do live somewhere rural in that respect. Because that's urban, this isn't urban"* (Jess, Askam).

Notably, the places that were chosen as contrasting with Askam, Martham or Mullion are urban areas, whereas those that are described as similar in some way are areas commonly thought of as sparsely inhabited and distinctly rural, such as Iceland and New Zealand. This indicates that, whilst the rural/urban binary has been widely challenged within academia (as it is in this thesis), it remains present in the minds and everyday language of rural residents and is used to construct distinct 'rural' identities (Heley & Jones, 2012). This does not, however, imply any notion of a fixed boundary or single definition of rurality within lay discourse, as the concept remains relational to individual perceptions and experiences. For instance, the relative 'rural-ness' of the place is defined by individuals according to other places they have known or are aware of, with some participants seeing their current place of residence as 'less rural' than where they had lived previously:

> *"We'd never settle in a town. We've lived in the country all our lives. And I'm 80 now and [my husband] will be 80 in December, so it's a long time to live in the country. I mean when we moved to Thornham - that was far more rural than Martham"* (Dee, Martham).

The perceived identity of rural place is thus relationally constructed in the light of other, particularly urban, places. Changes that are perceived as 'urban' can consequentially be disliked, and sometimes strongly resisted, since they are seen as incongruent with the place's rural character. This was evident in the accounts of several participants who

disliked features such as street lighting, ‘urban’ paving stones and ‘tidied-up’ areas that they consider ‘unnatural’ or not in keeping with the ‘rustic’, ‘country’ environment (see also Box 7.3). For instance:

> *“There’s been lots of development, people tidying things up. Whereas you’d be in quite a rustic, rural, rugged environment, they have more manicured bits and someone owns that now, someone looks after that now, rather than it just being a bit of field at the end of somebody’s garden…People coming down with the wrong attitude, intending to come and change, clipping and tidying and picket fences and all that sort of thing”* (Melanie, Mullion).

Like other interviewees, Melanie blames the ingress of supposedly urban practices that attempt to control ‘nature’ or manicure an inauthentic rurality on non-rural in-migrants. Given that Melanie was not born in Cornwall and grew up in London, her perception of these people as having the ‘wrong attitude’ implies that, for her, rural identity is a mind-set. It is not necessarily determined by birth but by certain values, actions and general outlook (a subject discussed in more detail in 7.2). However, she also implies that ‘locals’ naturally have the ‘correct’ attitude to country living and do not need to earn their rural identity.

In some cases, the equation of rurality with ‘nature’ is extended beyond descriptions of space and place and applied to particular individuals who have lived long lives in the countryside. For instance, Roz, a returnee resident of Askam, talked about how she believes the landscape, given enough time, can have a physical influence over the bodies of its inhabitants:

> *“I think here in Cumbria, through the summer, you find a physical synergy between people and the landscape. With my Dad and some of his friends, when I look at them together, they’re all spry men with bow legs who sort of lean into the wind”* (Roz, Askam).

In Roz’s eyes, the prolonged engagement of certain individuals within the Cumbrian landscape has led to them becoming entwined with the natural landscape. This is reminiscent of suggestions that people (such as farmers) whose everyday lives include a particularly involved and practiced relationship with the landscape become

particularly bonded – or 'hefted' - to the land (Gray, 2000; Olwig, 2008); a term Roz uses in a similar way elsewhere in her account. This description of the consubstantiality (as Gray (2000) calls it) between people and land conveys something of the embodied and becoming nature of people-place relationships (see 6.6). However, such associations also carry a risk of essentialising rural people and ascribing them with a sense of naturalism and authenticity, thereby enrolling them in notions of rural landscapes as 'natural', timeless and unchanging. As Edmonds (2004, p.15-16, quoted in Massey 2006, p. 9-10) observes in his explanation of the Lake District's origins as a National Park:

> "The Lakes had all that was needed for the making of "classic ground" outside the flow of modern life. Here were the ingredients of a changeless classical paradise located squarely within the boundaries of the nation' (p.15). Even the (occasional) figures that appeared in representations of the Lake District appeared 'as stable and timeless as the lakes and fells themselves, as if they were living in some form of 'natural state'."

This 'timeless' element within popular discourses of nature and rurality plays a role in shaping some perceptions of the temporality of place and evaluations regarding rural change. This is discussed further below.

6.3 A timeless rural?

As 'traditional' English villages, local narratives about Martham, Mullion and Askam particularly focus on their rural aspects and traditional practices. These narratives sometimes carry with them a sense of timelessness, reflecting ideas about the temporal fixity of the rural idyll that have been discussed elsewhere in the literature (Bunce, 2003; Murdoch, 2006; Woods, 2011). Participants across the case study sites talked nostalgically about traditional rural practices, 'slow' and 'simple' rural living and the escape the villages provide from the hustle and bustle of modern – or urban - life. Examples of such thinking include:

> *"And I still like the old days, I like the shire horses and that. And I can still picture Martham when it was only horse and carts and people used to walk and that…You see I'd like to still see horse and carts in the village"* (Bruce, Martham).

> *"I moved to Norfolk because I like the quiet pace of life. There's none of this 'things have to be done yesterday' attitude. I actually found that quite frustrating to start with because I was used to things getting done quickly, but I'm used to it now and really like the peace and quiet. Martham's like a time capsule really – things as they used to be"* (Gerald, Martham).

> *"And then you'll see [the pigeon-racers] on Saturday, there'll be about a dozen guys all wandering around and* (puts on a broad accent) *'has tha's come in yet lad?', 'Nah nah nah, I saw Charlie's got one?', 'What? Charlie's got one already?!'. You know. And it's quite funny watching them, with flat hats on and, it could be any century. It really could. That's what I like about Askam as well, you can be set back in time"* (Jim, Askam).

These references to 'going back in time' are reflective of romanticised representations that depict the countryside as an idyllic, traditional place that has somehow escaped the pitfalls and time-pressures that the rest of the world has succumbed to under globalisation and modernity (Short, 1991). The presence of features such as flat caps, (imagined) horse and carts and a perceived slow pace of life somehow brings the past closer to the present and allows people to feel they have escaped the pressures of modern life, at least in some ways, or for a brief period. This forms part of the attraction of rural life and construction of rural identity for many people but, as discussed in 3.3.1, such idyllic timelessness can disguise the processes of change and transformation that Askam, Martham and Mullion have constantly undergone and promote a desire to preserve places in a form of historical stasis (Massey, 2006; Pred, 1984). Such thinking may contribute (rightly or wrongly) to efforts to resist change.

Efforts to resist change and preserve 'historical' features are not only borne out of a desire to stabilise particular social representations of rurality as timeless and idyllic. They can also arise from a desire to preserve place-features that hold personal meaning and stimulate emotive memories for individuals. This was apparent in a walking interview with a Mullion resident, Lynette, who described her dismay at

changes that are taking place around a local farm that is one of her favourite areas. The vignette in Box 6.1 portrays how Lynette's opposition to the changes is connected both to her notion of this bit of countryside as traditional and timeless (which is likely to be influenced by wider social representations) and to her personal memories associated with it (see 6.5 for further exploration of the landscape's ability to retain and evoke personal memories).

Box 6.1: Tradition and change in an agricultural landscape: A walk with Lynette

Lynette grew up in the suburbs of Birmingham but moved to Falmouth, Cornwall, when she was a teenager. She now lives on the outskirts of Mullion with her partner, Tom, where they own a small parcel of land with a few pigs and chickens and try to live 'sustainably'. Lynette enjoys the type of 'rural living' that the area offers and embraces their home's relative isolation, liking *"the solitude of it"*. This, in part, explains her reaction to recent and proposed changes at a nearby farm, as the changes threaten particular aspects of rurality that are of value to her. She also expresses a keen interest in local history and argues that the farm includes features with important historical value that should be preserved.

Plate 6.1: The old cobbled lane that Lynette discusses

The farm is owned and leased out by Cornwall Council and possibly dates from the sixteenth century. According to Lynette, a recent change in the farm tenancy following the death of the previous occupant, Ted, has led to a number of transformations. These include the construction of two new barns, the removal of traditional stone walls and the neglect of some old farm buildings and a cobbled lane. At the time of our interview, there were also proposed plans for the redevelopment of the farm buildings into housing, which Lynette and Tom (among others) were trying to block. Over a cup of tea, Lynette begins by telling me about the proposed development and her feelings about it, which are clearly connected to her fond memories of the previous farmer and her perception of the land as traditional and somewhat timeless:

> *"We're sort of resigned at the moment. It's been so long, this [planning process]. Since 2009. We were really upset to begin with, because we were very fond of the farmer, classic sort of Cornish farmer - really nice chap. And he had cows and every day he'd go and get the cows in and milk them etc. And it was all lovely and the back lanes were all beautiful with lovely old cobbles on the floor, easily from the 1400s if not before."*

Lynette then takes me for a walk around the accessible parts of the farm, pointing out some of the buildings that either have historical interest or evoke personal memories for her. For instance, after walking through a working, but slightly ramshackle, yard we come to the entrance of an old stone barn where Lynette recalls her experiences of helping Ted with some of the farm-work:

"This was where they kept all the grain. It's got fantastic flooring in there and the grain would be sort of this high (gestures)*. And Ted would get it up by using an old bath and an auger and they'd sort of suck it up into those doors there. We used to help him with that. And they're going to take down all these buildings and I reckon they're going to do that quite soon."*

A little later, we come to one of the cobbled lanes that she had mentioned earlier, enclosed by hedged, dry-stone walls, to which she is particularly attached (see Plate 6.1). This attachment is based on her perception of the historical and aesthetic qualities of the lane, but it is also based on her memories of Ted:

"This is what I love, this is a little cobbled lane. Ted used to walk the cows up and down here twice a day. They'd plod down into the yard and back again. But in the spring it's absolutely beautiful. All the roses and wild flowers really are wonderful. Unfortunately it's now been a bit ruined, but under here it's actually cobbled all the way. And I think it's something really special. I think it ought to have some sort of protection."

In walking with Lynette, her attachment to the landscape is evident in the way in which particular sites evoke memories for her and she responds to recent changes she notices. As we walk along the lane, our conversation is disrupted when we turn a bend and come across a large stretch of stone wall that has been badly damaged:

"Oh, this wall has been knocked down. That's new. This was a really nice wall before. I bet they couldn't get the combine past. He's a nice enough chap this new farming chap but that's terrible. See this is what upsets me, you read the council's stuff and they go on about how important AONBs are – this is an AONB and we've got an SSSI just over there – and then they let this happen. They shouldn't be doing it, they should be making good rather than taking things apart. It's the lack of respect that I really object to."

Further along the lane, we come to an outlook over a patchwork of stone-walled fields, which prompts Lynette to reminisce about the times she and Tom used to help Ted here:

"In the summer and the spring, this was just so beautiful. This was like walking back in time. It was really lovely. And when, Tom would help out the farmer sometimes, I'd bring him lunch and it would be just like going back in the, you know, way back."

Lynette's descriptions evoke a timeless scene of rural idyll in which she imagines her experiences of the landscape to be similar to that held by people 'way back'. The influence of formal representations on the formulation of this imagined scene is exemplified by Lynette's subsequent discussion of a television documentary series called 'Wartime Farm', in which historians "turn back the clock" to run a farm as it would have been during World War II (BBC, 2014). The programme portrays the challenges of farming in this era and highlights the struggles and hardships of agricultural rural life, so can certainly not be described as depicting idyllic rural scenes. Yet it does tap into a popular nostalgia for a 'simpler', non-intensive back-to-the-land way of living (Halfacree, 2006b), which Lynette alludes to in her recollection of bringing lunch to the farmer and seeks to emulate in her everyday life.

It is important to stress that rural residents are not naïve to the power of idyllic representations and institutional efforts to protect and reproduce these. James, a resident of Askam for twenty-one years, made the link between 'picture-postcard' images and resistance to change when talking about how he feels the National Trust's efforts to preserve the countryside obscure its vitality as a working landscape that is not just looked at but used as part of everyday life:

> *"It's not an organisation I'm personally in love with, the National Trust. Every area that they encapsulate has been a working area, and they want to turn it into a picture postcard. But it's been worked its whole life. You know, up the Lake District there, it's all been mined etc. for years. But even the bypass that you came on when you were travelling down here, they were totally against that*[7]*. They still are totally against anything like that"* (James, Askam).

The accuracy of this perception of the National Trust is open to debate, but it does indicate James' awareness of the impact that such institutions have on the politics and materiality of the countryside (and perceptions of it). As Blacksell (2005, p.519) points out with reference to the South West Coast Path,

> "[this] is a manufactured and manipulated landscape, managed to measure up to a quite particular ideology and set of ideals…the National Trust is such a pervasive influence on rural landscape and rural landscape taste in the UK that it is hard to believe that anyone walking the South West Coast Path would be unaware of how much the organisation has done to underwrite the nature of the experience."

The National Trust's resistance to the changes that James referred to is also reflective of wider preservationist movements that seek to stabilise the meanings associated with a place by preserving - or 'museumising' - the 'artefact' of landscape in what is considered an authentic manner (Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Riley & Harvey, 2005). Entrikin (1991, p.58) puts such attempts down to a "perceived human need for attachment and identity". The Lake District's designation as a National Park is of particular relevance here as, partly through this designation, it has come to symbolise a particular version of a 'natural' and 'rural' landscape that is imbued with a sense of

[7] The bypass James refers to is the A590 High and Low Newton bypass, which was completed in 2008, creating a direct link to the Furness peninsula.

tradition and changeless nature. Despite having been altered by human forces over the years[8], classical representations associated with the Lake District depict it as "an icon of stability and harmony" (Edmonds, 2004, p.15, quoted in Massey, 2006, p9) and even an icon of 'Englishness' (Tolia-Kelly, 2007). As Urry (1995, p.193) puts it, "the Lake District appears to be the very embodiment of nature". Such representations create the appearance of synonymous parallels between 'nature', rurality and stability. Changes such as the bypass James that referred to can disrupt the perceived stability of this 'natural' landscape and thus threaten the area's 'natural' or 'rural' identity.

Whilst this idea of rural timelessness can have an influence in promoting resistance to change, interviewees' perceptions of, and reactions to, change were generally more complicated and sophisticated than this (as James' account showed). Although people may yearn for idyllic elements of the past, they also recognise that places have always changed (or – in the words of relational geographers - are constantly 'in becoming') and believe that change is essential to the life of a place. This perspective aligns more closely with Massey's (2006) narrative of the Lake District, in which she emphasises change and movement in the area's process of continuous formation by tracing the geomorphological history of 'Lake District' rocks (see 3.3.2). Narratives linking place-change with 'life' are further explored in Chapter Seven.

Individual responses to change are also, of course, context dependent and, returning for a moment to the interview with Lynette, it is interesting that, while Lynette feels strongly that the historical features of the farm buildings and land should be protected, she was notably ambivalent about the subject of Mullion Harbour and whether the National Trust should continue to maintain it (see Chapter Eight for a full discussion of this issue):

> Lynette: *"I think that's fair enough actually. There never used to be a harbour there, there used to be a cove. And it's not a proper harbour. Being*

[8] For instance, the Lake District was once a heavily forested area.

a sailing person, it's not a harbour you can use really… So personally I don't mind if it falls down. I don't know what all the fuss is about really."

RW: *"Hmm. For some people its history isn't it."*

Lynette: *"Yeah. But given that Mullion Cove was just a cove, and that's how nature made it. I mean if it was a harbour that protected a lot of boats then fair enough, but it's not."*

Whilst there are likely to be a number of factors bound up in explaining this difference in Lynette's views towards the farm and towards the harbour, Lynette's attachment to the farm – based on the personal meanings embedded in the landscape there – strongly influenced her desire to protect this particular asset of place and temporally 'fix' it in line with idyllic representations of rurality. In contrast, when it came to the subject of the harbour, which does not feature significantly in her personal attachment to Mullion, she appeared more open to recognising the longer-term, evolving nature of place; and thus to accepting change. Hence, whilst her attitude to the farm might be seen as indicating a bounded and timeless view of place, her attitude to the harbour reveals a more relational and fluid perspective of place-temporality. This highlights that a single individual's perception of rural place can be multiple and potentially contradictory (Harvey, 1996). It also underscores the need to be mindful of both the context of change and the importance that particular landscape features can hold in people's place identity and attachment, when seeking to understand responses to place-change.

6.4 A Cornish idyll? Representation, memory and constructing identities in Mullion

Whilst elements of the idyll construct were present in the narratives of participants in all three case studies, they were particularly strong in Mullion so I focus on this village here to further demonstrate the influence of representations (alongside personal experiences) on constructions of place identity. Mullion has a relatively large elderly

population (see Fig. 4.2), many of whom are in-migrants who moved to the area in search of a quieter, community-focused life in the countryside. Similar motivations were found in Martham and (to a lesser extent) Askam, but the Mullion interviews revealed narratives with elements of what might be described as a specifically *Cornish* idyll, highlighting that even dominant popular discourses are multiple and nuanced according to regional and local contexts (Jones, 1995; Short, 2006). For many in-migrants, the attraction of moving to Mullion was linked to wider ideas about Cornwall as a county.

Cornwall is often portrayed as having a strong cultural identity, distinct from the rest of England, and in April 2014 it was announced that the Cornish are to become recognised as a national minority under the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Much of the (popular version of) Cornish identity is historically based on, and reinforced by, tourist attractions and promotional materials that seek to draw visitors to the county through a somewhat romanticised celebration of its culture and heritage. Popular constructions of Cornwall's identity thus include Arthurian legends (Robb, 1998), folk music (Yarwood & Charlton, 2009), Methodism (Harvey et al., 2007) and tin mining (Laviolette & Baird, 2011), as well as quaint fishing villages, smuggling, mysticism, and traditional farming. Such well-established (but sometimes contradictory - see Laviolette, 2003) dimensions of Cornish identity have also been persistently reiterated in works of art and literature (e.g. du Maurier, 2006 [1936]; Ellis, 1898; Vyvyan, 1948). These historically-based associations play a role in constructing Mullion, and Cornwall more widely, as a distinctive and appealing place to live[9].

A particularly illustrative example of how the Cornish idyll is reproduced in Mullion through formal representations can be found in the 'Mullion Guide' (2012). This community-produced guide is aimed at visitors and newcomers and details information

[9] Assertions of Cornwall's distinctiveness are also enrolled in political discourses. *Mebyon Kernow* ('The Party for Cornwall'), for instance, campaign for Cornish devolution on this basis; see Jones and MacLeod (2004).

about Mullion's community and history, as well as promoting local businesses and community groups. The introductory paragraph states: "Built around its 15th century church and cove, Mullion is steeped in history, 'proper Cornish' and rich in community" (Mullion Guide, 2012, p.3). The guide goes on to celebrate a host of 'Cornish', 'traditional' and 'community'-centred activities that take place in the village:

> "The *Old Cornwall Society* meets regularly and arranges special outings, the Horticultural Society organises a remarkable annual show, *Cornish* evening and a very popular 'Garden Safari' ending with a *Cornish cream tea*. There is a *Cornish language* group…[and other community events]. On the last Sunday evening of every month the 'Inn singers' entertain with their *Cornish* songs in the Mounts Bay Inn. Finally, a *Farmers Market* is held every month which this year raised £500 for Mullion Christmas Lights"
>
> (Mullion Guide, 2012, p.7, emphasis added).

This excerpt illustrates the centrality of Cornishness to dominant constructions of Mullion's identity. It also reflects findings from the interviews that point to how dimensions of local identity are performed by residents through particular 'community' practices (c.f. Liepins, 2000a) that maintain a continuity with the past. As I explore in Chapter Seven, whilst idyllic representations may sometimes lead to notions of timelessness and resistance to change, these community practices can actually support an accommodation of change through providing an element of stability to fundamental aspects of place identity.

The above aspects of Cornish identity are not solely imagined from representations of Cornish rurality. They are also influenced by individuals' past experiences of the county, carried forward in memory. Several in-migrants interviewed talked about how their fond memories of holidaying in Cornwall contributed to their decision to move there. For a few people, these memories were specifically related to Mullion, but for many it was vivid memories of holidaying in Cornwall generally that provided a strong emotive draw:

> *"I knew Cornwall from working in a hotel when I was twenty, and I used to go back there a lot. And I said one day, I'm going to live in Cornwall. Well, I*

> *was thinking then of Port Isaac, because I loved it…I always had this dream of living in Cornwall. I think it stems even earlier than that actually. My uncle had a caravan near Tintagel and we went there when I was thirteen. And that I can remember…it would've been my first visit to Cornwall and that really made a huge impression"* (Helen, Mullion).

> *"When I came down first, just after the war, we stayed with a real old Cornish couple out on Gwithian dunes. It was called 'The Dunes'. They had a little pink painted wooden bungalow and we had a lovely holiday there. And the old boy there, he used to love chatting with children but I was always a sentence behind him trying to work out what he was saying. Because he was so Cornish, you know, and I was obviously from up London way. But it was amazing, I thought 'what is he talking? A language that I should know?'* (laughs). *After the second week I could follow him more or less closely. But a lovely old couple. First came across a real Cornish pasty there, you know - size of a dinner plate and a whole meal in a pastry case"* (Judith, Mullion).

As Judith's quote reveals, memories of holidaying in Cornwall (particularly in childhood) form part of the images that people hold of the county and include ideas about particularly 'Cornish' features such as pasties, the seaside and the language. Childhood memories are often fondly recalled, as they may link to a sense of security, control and self-identity experienced in formative years (Chawla, 1992; Cooper Marcus, 1992; Malpas, 1999). Ideas contained within them can, therefore, be strong and influential. Perceptions of Cornwall gained from earlier tourist experiences inevitably include an eclectic mix of associations with aspects of Cornish folklore and identity that are strongly linked to the past. These are reinforced by both representations *and* personal experience, highlighting that such aspects of rural identity are not solely the result of discursive myths but also arise from, and are reiterated by, everyday life and material realities (Jones, 1995).

As Helen's account above exemplifies, several in-migrants spoke about wanting to move to Cornwall generally, rather than Mullion specifically. Although these people now value the distinctive qualities of Mullion in particular, their original attraction was to the area somewhat homogenously conceived of as Cornwall. The interviews also revealed other examples of a tendency for residents originating from outside Cornwall to include a wider area in their discussions about place than those who were born and brought-up

within the county. For instance, when asked how long she had lived in the area, one participant, Melanie, qualified her answer by giving two time periods – the twenty-two years that she had lived in Cornwall and the thirteen years that she had lived specifically in Mullion. For Melanie it was the move to Cornwall from where she was previously in London that was significant, rather than to Mullion in particular. Her understanding of the question about length of residence as referring to the wider area indicates a certain conflation of Mullion with Cornwall as a whole. This contrasts with the understanding of another participant, Caroline, who directly answered with sixteen years and only mentioned later (when prompted) that she was brought up only eight miles away in Helston. Caroline clearly saw herself as a non-local and, unlike Melanie, did not see her previous residence within Cornwall as relevant to the question.

'Cornishness' also emerged as an important aspect of place identity for lifelong residents, but their Cornishness tended to be subtly or unselfconsciously expressed and performed, usually in relation to their family's history in the area or through their desire to preserve the Cornish language or sense of community. Direct references to people's Cornishness were more likely to be made by in-migrants to the area. For instance:

> *"I'm not Cornish, far from it. So I mean ideally the people who'll be able to tell you what it was like are the true Cornish – people like Derek, people like Bill…Bill remembers so much about his family, being involved in fishing. He's very intelligent. And he speaks Cornish"* (Alan, Mullion).

> *"And I said [to our gardener] we're going to be here a lot more. He's a real local and he said 'well why wouldn't you? It's paradise'"* (Helen, Mullion).

For Alan, Bill's family history and ability to speak Cornish appeared to be important signifiers of authenticity, marking him out as a 'true' Cornishman. Similarly, Helen's emphasis on her gardener being a 'real local' was used as a way of adding legitimacy to her view about Mullion being such a nice place to live. The presence of such 'traditional' individuals within the community thus serves (for some individuals) to

reaffirm the existence of the Cornish idyll they seek. Such discourses about the authenticity of 'real locals' were also present in Askam and Martham and are clearly not limited to Cornish villages.

This idea of an ancestry-deepened sense of belonging is sometimes extended to the point that particular place-related characteristics are thought to be ingrained in, and passed on through, a genetic disposition in the bodies of 'true' locals. This can be seen in the way that the 'classic-ness' of the farmer Lynette referred to (see Box 6.1) provided her with a short-hand method for describing his character. Another, more literal example of such thinking was portrayed by Judith:

> *"But I mean it's ingrained really. I notice that it's much easier for the Cornish class to speak Cornish than it is for me to pronounce it with my Anglican background"* (Judith, Mullion).

Judith's speculation is highly questionable, but the point remains that perceptions of place-related identity can run deep, to the point of being seen as genealogically embedded in the bodies of those with long familial connections. The life histories of certain individuals, and their families before them, form a key part in the way in which places are understood – both by those individuals and others in the community.

Bill's own account also revealed his strong identification with the Cornish culture and Mullion specifically, which, like Alan's description, centred for a large part around his family history. He talked a lot about his family's history in Mullion since they moved there in 1640 and about how he is trying to learn more Cornish because, although they spoke it fluently, his parents did not pass it down to him:

> *"Of course that's the other thing, you see, most English people I meet, as far as they're concerned the Cornish language is 'alreet me handsome'* (laughs). *But it should sound like* (speaks in Cornish)…*My parents and grandparents, they came out with these words and quite often we thought that some of them they made up themselves* (chuckles). *Didn't have a clue. Because we was brainwashed when we went to school. We never did anything about Cornish history at all, hardly, not more than Trelawney. And they all revered Trelawney then, but he was a quisling, he worked for both*

> *sides…. But my grandmother, my mother's mother, she'd say things like 'ooh, look at that old quilken over there' and she'd be talking about a frog! Q, U, I, L, K, E, N, that's a frog. You see, so though she wasn't speaking it conversationally, everyday language, objects, generally tools and farming words, fish - I would get the Cornish name as well as the English name…*
>
> *…And you can talk to, well Dave there* (a gentleman we had stopped for Bill to talk to)*, he's my second cousin, his father and my grandfather were brothers. But you know, we were talking about the 1920s, not that I was born then, but we'd talk about the 1920s and 30s and I have the knowledge of it like. It is interesting."*

The social history, Cornish culture and language thus emerged as an important part of Bill's attachment to Mullion. However, he feels that the traditional community spirit and culture is now being lost - to the point that it is eroding his attachment to the place (similar sentiments were also expressed by Askam residents; see 7.3.2):

> *"I don't know that you shall see that social bit that I knew, that Cornish social scene…If you ask me, it's not like that now. Now if you go over to Brittany, it's still like that. We go over there a lot now and the little village which we stay in, I would say that reminds me of Mullion 50 years ago…But um, no I never thought I would say that I could live somewhere else. You know? But yeah, I do like the way of life over there. It is different. If you talk to the Bretagne people it's like it was here 50 years ago."*

Perceptions about Cornish and Mullion identity are thus distinctly relational in that they are variably constructed (and performed) in relation to people's own histories, backgrounds and social networks, as well as to other places. A multitude of childhood memories (whether on holiday or growing up in Cornwall), sociocultural representations, life-course experiences and community involvements all contribute (in varying degrees) to shaping perceptions of a person's own level of 'belonging' in Mullion, or Cornwall more widely. Of course, perceptions of place and belonging in turn have an influence over these representations and experiences, so that these different aspects of place construction and experience become enmeshed and interdependent (see 3.2.3).

Notions of the rural idyll were also present in the narratives of Askam and Martham residents, who equally valued the rural aspects of their village. Like Mullion, the

identities of Askam and Martham were linked to that of their wider counties. Cumbria and Norfolk's well-known landscapes of the Lake District and Norfolk Broads respectively were often referred to by interviewees as attractive and valuable assets of the area. Both of these landscapes conjure up images of the classic rural idyll in the same way that Cornwall does and were closely associated with the villages' identities. Askam's identity, however, appeared to be more weakly associated with idyll discourses than in the other two villages, perhaps due to its shorter and more industrial history (see 4.3.2). The presence of notions about the rural idyll was perhaps particularly striking in Mullion due to the importance of the tourist industry, which commodifies the area by emphasising its idyllic features - as portrayed in the excerpt above from the Mullion Guide. This variance in strength of discourse highlights that the social and political contexts of a locality, as well as wider representations and everyday experiences, are important in the production of rural space (Halfacree, 2006a). One might expect that the stronger presence of the idyll discourse in Mullion and Martham than in Askam would result in residents there being more likely to resist changes such as windfarms, which are sometimes portrayed as antithetical to this rural idyll (Hoppe-Kilpper & Steinhauser, 2002; Short, 2002). However, as discussed in Chapter Ten, I did not find this to be the case – at least in the context of existing windfarms – and, in fact, attitudes in Askam were generally more negative than in the other villages.

6.5 Personal memories in place and landscape

Whilst there may be elements of commonality in people's attachments to landscape (such as a beautiful view, or proximity to the sea), these elements are variously experienced; partly because perceived significance is not drawn purely from material qualities. For each participant, various meanings related to personal experiences and memories of being in the landscape were inscribed within it. The affective power of

landscape and its links to personal meanings was particularly well articulated by a Mullion resident and artist, Michael, as portrayed in Box 6.2.

Box 6.2: Memory and affect in the landscape: A walk with Michael

Michael is an artist (a member of the St. Ives School of Painting) who has lived in Mullion for twenty years. During our interview, we walk along the footpath through Predannack, an area on the Lizard peninsula just south of Mullion characterised by high cliffs, a rocky coastline and open moorland. Michael frequently walks the same paths here and has based numerous paintings on the area. As we walk, he tells me about how his particularly strong emotional attachment to this landscape is, in part, borne from his memories of experiencing it with his wife who passed away some years ago. It is this emotional attachment that Michael believes is crucial to his art:

Plate 6.2: Cliffs at Predannack, near Mullion

Michael: "*I think this bit of coastline is absolutely magic, and it means a lot to me. Some artists of course just like a nice view, and there's nothing wrong with that. You know, they go down to Porthleven and do a quick painting of Porthleven and so on. But I always find that a very difficult relationship unless the place has some kind of, I don't know, emotional attachment for me. I think I'm more interested in trying to express through the painting the experience of being in that particular landscape."*

RW: *"And that's more than just the view?"*

Michael: "*Oh that's more than just the view."*

Michael's connection with the more-than-visual aspects of the landscape is reflected in his art – the abstract style of which suggests forms but does not attempt to reproduce them 'accurately', either in terms of shape or colour. It is the 'feel' of the landscape that Michael seeks to represent, rather than the look of it *per se.* Later on in the walk, he mentions that he dislikes painting from photographs. He explains how his attempt to capture the affective quality of the landscape cannot be achieved by working from the visual image of a photograph; it requires him to be emplaced within the landscape:

Michael: "I think the problem with using photographs mainly is that you nearly always end up painting the photograph. It sort of dominates whatever you do. You can't get away from it."

RW: "It kind of limits your inspiration?"

Michael: "It does. You might say 'I'm only going to use this for ideas' but then you'll end up thinking 'is that bit of rock, it's not quite in the right place'. But a photograph will never tell you what this was really like, would it? Well, it would give you an idea, but (sentence unfinished)*. I'm also fascinated with memory and I think, for example, that if I took a*

photograph of the two of us now, and this view, then shortly afterwards if I looked at that photograph I wouldn't have the memory of the two of us here, I would end up with the image of the photograph. Which is not at all the same as the experience of being with someone in the space. And also what's fascinating, I always think, is the experience of the other person in the space. And that's quite different to an individual. It has, I think, a much more profound effect on space. So my experience here on my own would be quite different to the experience with you. And probably vice versa. In my mind, that is what art really ought to be trying to do."

RW: "Yes that's fascinating. It's almost like although art is visual, it's going beyond the visual."

Michael: "Yes! Absolutely. Yes, sometimes the visual can overtake things. In fact that's what my piece at [a local art gallery] is really about. It's about memory and how things like photographs can dominate the memory."

Michael's artistic endeavours to convey more than just the visual elements of landscape indicates his acknowledgement of the affective and elusive qualities of landscape, with which current geographical debates seek to engage (e.g. Jones, 2005; Tilley, 1999; Wylie, 2007). It is also indicative of a wider move within the art-world to de-prioritise the visual in favour of promoting non-representational – i.e. multisensory, embodied and affective - engagements with art (Roberts, 2013). For instance, Crouch and Toogood (1999, p.75) show how the geographical knowledge displayed in the art of Peter Lanyon, an early member of the St. Ives School, was formed "through everyday immersion in place and through bodily and intellectual exploration of that experience. Lanyon never saw himself as an abstract painter: he *abstracted* feelings and other knowledge of place into paintings". This type of embodied engagement is important to understanding the multiple ways in which residents relate to place and landscape and may have implications for responses to change; a subject I return to in 6.6.

The link between landscape and memory, as Michael alludes, is a close and powerful one. It was particularly evident in the walking interviews that the landscape prompted an array of personal memories and meanings for participants, which formed part of the emotional bond they had with the place. This forms an integral part of how the temporality of place is understood, as memory serves to bring past experiences into the present, affecting an individual's current involvement and engagement with the landscape. As Cloke and Jones (2001, p.652) put it, "landscape is where the past and future are co-present with the present through processes of memory and imagination". This is recognised by Roz, an Askam resident, whose account highlighted how memories can be part of a deeply personal relationship with a place and can be evoked by an array of smells and sounds – as well as sights - in the landscape:

> *"Where my Dad lives is across the road from the house where I was brought up, and sometimes in the evening I go out and there are noises that haven't changed. The wind moving the treetops, the rooks calling, or the smell of grass being cut, which takes me years back. And it's very personal. It's indescribable to anybody else"* (Roz, Askam).

Roz talks about being somehow transported back into her past through the evocation of memories, revealing a blurred temporality in her perception of the place. Her quote is indicative of the important role that memory has in shaping understandings of place and landscape. Throughout the interviews, people attributed their love for the place, at least in part, to its centrality in fondly-held memories, particularly of their childhood. For instance:

> *"I think most of my friends are the same as I am. I mean you've probably gathered I'm quite passionate about the area really, and so are they. I don't know why. It's probably because we used to hike around this area all the while together and that you know a little bit about them and they've all got good memories"* (Mark, Martham).

> *"It was a lovely childhood. In the winter we used to go to Chypons[10] and in the woods there was two lovely great chestnut trees, which of course we picked the chestnuts. In the spring my mother used to take my brother and myself down to Chypons and there was a hedge down there full of little wild, single-trumpet, daffodils. Always went there every year. So it was lovely"* (Terrance, Mullion).

These emotionally-charged, nostalgic memories relating to previous life experiences are clearly strongly linked to the physical aspects of a place and can be evoked through re-experiencing the landscape. A particular place-feature will be perceived differently by individuals depending on the personal associations that it has for them. These associations might include personal memories or stories told to them by others (see Chapter Seven for discussion of the social memory element of this). Re-visiting a site, whether on an everyday or occasional basis therefore not only involves a straightforward sensual perception of it as it objectively exists in that moment. The site's affect also arises, in part, from the echoes of past people and events known by the individual (either directly or indirectly) to have been experienced there (Crang &

[10] Chypons is a former hamlet that is now part of Mullion.

Travlou, 2001; Edensor, 2005). These may be spontaneously evoked during everyday encounters with sites that people frequently visit or pass; sometimes arising inexplicably, but often prompted by a particular sound or smell present at that particular moment. Personal experiences (and social memories) are thus embedded within, and evoked by, the physical attributes of the landscape itself.

Plate 6.3: Former primary school, Martham

A pertinent example of how memories embedded in landscape features influence perceptions of them in the present is the case of a former primary school in Martham. For older residents of Martham, the now vacant and boarded-up building prompted a number of memories about their school days. The building is set to be demolished; a change which several participants talked about with a sense of sadness and loss, as the building clearly acts as a symbolic transmitter of childhood memories. However, for some people, its current state of dilapidation is believed to be worse than the prospect of its complete removal because they feel it is 'not right' for it to remain in such a neglected state. For instance, Vernon, a resident of forty-two years and member of the parish council, pointed out the building and explained:

> *"That's a site which was sold by Norfolk County Council and it's just sitting there. And it really depresses people really. Because a lot of people went to school there and to see your old school basically with weeds growing out etc. is actually more depressing than if they demolished the whole thing, to be perfectly honest. …The sooner they knock it down the better I think, as far as most people are concerned. The fight to preserve it has gone from the village"* (Vernon, Martham).

Particular perceptions of place are, therefore, embedded in, and arise from, the life history of the individual. It is inevitable, then, that changes to familiar sites that have played a significant role in an individual's life can provoke strong and emotional responses. But these responses are not always about simply resisting such changes.

In the case of Martham School, it is the threat of happy childhood memories being intruded-on by the site's state of neglect that is of concern, rather than the prospect of the site's complete removal. Responses to change are also influenced by the fact that, whilst emotional attachments are important, more detached cognitive processes also come into play. Brown and Perkins (1992, p.283) argue that, "as distinct and objective observers of settings, humans engage in rational economic analyses of places, are able to specify the costs and benefits of bonds to places, and are willing to trade off one place for another when the benefits dictate". A phenomenological viewpoint would challenge the idea that humans are 'distinct and objective observers of settings', as this relies on a Cartesian-style division between subject and object, belying the enmeshment - or dwelling (Ingold, 2000) - of humans in the world around them. However, notwithstanding this challenge, it is reasonable to argue that opinions regarding changes, and decisions about whether to act to resist these, are formulated according to (supposedly) rational thought processes, as well as more embodied responses. This balancing of emotive responses based on memories of a site with practical, 'rational' considerations will be discussed further in relation to housing development (see 7.4.2) and windfarms (see 10.4).

6.6 Embodied experiences: Body, self and landscape

The textures and materiality of the landscape offer opportunities for physical exploration and corporeal engagement with it. Participants across all case studies frequently referred to their use of the countryside for recreational activities, such as walking, cycling, fishing and running. Clearly, these activities require a physical and multi-sensory engagement with the landscape (Edensor, 2000; Lorimer, 2012; Spinney, 2006) and are often undertaken with the explicit aim of improving ones physical or mental well-being. Indeed, several participants explicitly connected their recreational use of the landscape with the health of their bodies; as depicted in Box 6.3.

Box 6.3: Landscape in the body: A walk with Wilfred and James

Wilfred, an eighty-two-year-old who has lived in Askam his whole life, was recommended to me as a participant by James, a resident of Askam for twenty-one years, who considers Wilfred to be particularly knowledgeable about Askam and its past. I interviewed Wilfred and James together and, after a short chat at the local community centre, we embarked on a long but leisurely walk around Askam. The walk was led by Wilfred and encompassed areas connected to the village's mining past, particularly focusing on Askam 'Pier'[11] and the shoreline to the south where spoil heaps and waterholes from the mines remain.

Amongst his tales and memories of the mining days, Wilfred talks about his deep attachment to Askam, which is partly based on his love of walking in the surrounding landscape. Towards the end of the walk James begins to tire and, as we approach some steep sand dunes we need to traverse from the estuary beach, he comments on the exertion, breathing heavily as we ascend:

> Wilfred: "*We're going right up the hill there."*
>
> James: "*Oh Jesus."*
>
> RW (to James): "*He's making you work today."*
>
> James: *"Is this SAS training I'm getting here Wilfred?"*

Wilfred laughs at that. In contrast to James - despite being more than twenty years older - Wilfred appears to climb the hill with ease. Clearly very fit for his age, he recognises the effect that his long-term engagement with the landscape has had on his body:

> RW: "*Do you still do a lot of walking then?"*
>
> Wilfred: *"Yeah. The wife and I, I've two false knees in now but up until then, for quite a long while, every week, every spare hour we had we'd be out. And I've seen us walk, no kidding, sixty miles some weeks. Add it up, over the seven days, sixty miles. But generally, thirty no problem. Oh it's good."*
>
> RW: *"Well it's obviously kept you quite fit and healthy."*
>
> Wilfred: "*Oh yeah. I go to my doctor and even last week…he said to me, 'you know, you're one hell of a fit guy for your age. You're doing really good'.*"

This physical benefit from walking is time-wrought, as it derives from a lifetime's experience that has shaped Wilfred's fitness. The landscape can be described as having become inscribed upon his body through his prolonged engagement with it. Corporeal relationships with the landscape thus go beyond a mere practical experience *of* it. As Ingold (2011, p.95) writes, "we *inhabit* our environment: we are part of it; and through this practice of habitation it becomes part of us too" *(original emphasis)*.

[11] Askam 'Pier' is a slag bank that stretches from Askam out into the Duddon Estuary (see 8.3 for more details).

The landscape is also thought to bring psychological benefits. For instance, Fiona, a Martham resident, spoke about the sky and feeling of space in Norfolk, which she feels is psychologically restorative:

> *"I think the thing about, that really hit me when I came down to Norfolk, was the acres of sky. Because there's so much sky, and because it's so open and flat you've got acres and acres of sky. And that's so different, even from being in a town, let alone a city. That really floored me when I first came down. But having that space makes you feel better"* (Fiona, Martham).

This reflects a growing political and academic recognition that access to the countryside, 'nature' and open space promotes both physical and psychological good-health by reducing stress and anxiety and enabling relaxation, calmness and psychological 'restoration' (Kaplan, 1989; Pretty et al., 2007; Rubenstein, 1997; Taylor et al., 2001; Ulrich, 1979; 1983).

Plate 6.4: The River Thurne at Martham

Similar references to the 'big skies' and feelings of space and 'emptiness' that Martham's flat and open landscape affords were common. This aspect of Martham (and wider Norfolk) identity is, in part, a visual appreciation influenced by popular representations and landscape paintings depicting the picturesque waterways, windmills and 'big skies' of Norfolk. Constable's paintings, for instance, include depictions of the drama and space of Norfolk skies (particularly at Yarmouth). However, this role of landscape in place identity cannot be understood purely in terms of a 'landscape gaze' (see 3.2.1). Since such spatially-contingent perceptions are formed relative to the position of the perceiver as part of that landscape, they entail the physical immersion of the person within the landscape. Naturally, Fiona had seen images of the Norfolk landscape before moving to the area, but the skyscape still 'floored' her when she experienced it

for herself. This is indicative of how representational elements of people-place relationships both emerge from, and impact upon, embodied experiences in an iterative manner (Bender, 2001; Crouch, 2010; Merrifield, 1993). Whilst an image might conjure up an idea of a particular landscape and its affect (and is usually produced based on the creator's experience of that landscape), the *feeling* of space can only be realised by being situated in the landscape and experiencing its size and form in relation to oneself. As one Mullion interviewee, Andrew, said:

> *"When you're sitting on that beach and the waves are pounding in and the wind is blowing you and you're sort of caught up in this storm, you are but a grain of sand compared. And that grain of sand puts your whole life into perspective"* (Andrew, Mullion).

Thus, the affective qualities of landscape may be partly related to its aesthetics but can only be experienced by being present within the landscape itself. Such engagements echo ideas about 'dwelling' (Ingold, 2000) and post-phenomenological perspectives on the iterative becoming of self and landscape (Ash & Simpson, 2014; Rose & Wylie, 2006). A conscious acknowledgement of these nonrepresentational aspects of landscape was evident in the interview with Michael (see Box 6.2), as it was the situated experience of being immersed within the landscape, and the affect that the landscape has upon him, that was of interest to Michael, rather than the way it looks – an experience that differs with each engagement. This demonstrates how lay knowledges can encompass a range of different understandings that align with various academic conceptualisations of landscape, reminding us that lay discourses are not separate from academic discourses but intertwine with, and ultimately underpin, them (Halfacree, 1993; Jones, 1995). Similarly, Andrew, another Mullion artist, concisely alluded to what could be described as a dialectical becoming of self and landscape:

> *"You know, man [sic] has made its mark on the landscape and the landscape has made its mark on man"* (Andrew, Mullion).

Expressions within the interviews of such reflexivity regarding this process were rare. Both Michael's and Andrew's views admittedly perhaps arise from a particularly

considered and analytical perspective gained from the centrality of landscape to their everyday life and work. However, less consciously-considered phrases also reveal a widespread sense that people and landscapes are somehow inextricably linked and help form each other. When talking about her grandson's love of the seas around Mullion, Barbara described his connection with the land/seascape as being bodily embedded:

> *"Surfing mad you see, that's what it is. The sea does get into their blood if they're born here. I said to my daughter I think he's got seawater running through his veins, he's so obsessed with it"* (Barbara, Mullion).

The 'sea in the blood' analogy that Barbara uses is her way of expressing the close relationship that her grandson has with the sea and the influence that it has had over both his physical and psychological development. The metaphor is similar to the idea of relational convergence between sea and surfer that Anderson (2012, p.570) explores, whereby "surfers, boards, and waves are 'connected' together to form one coherent unit…the surfed wave becomes a place whose constituent parts are not simply connected together; rather, their thresholds are blurred into a converged entity/process".

The accounts of embodied experiences discussed here demonstrate the importance of landscape to conceptualisations of place and its influence over perceptions of bodies, identities and belonging (of both selves and others). In so doing, they add to our understanding of lay knowledges of place-based experiences, highlighting their complexity, multiplicity and sophistication, and challenging an over-emphasis on the role of idyll-seeking in positive conceptualisations of rural place (Cloke & Thrift, 1990; Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Malpas, 1994). They also provide a basis for understanding the elements of place and landscape that are important to rural residents and that are likely to be most strongly protected in the face of change. The emphasis on embodied and multisensory, as well as visual, engagements with the landscape, indicates that

material changes which have a visual impact on the landscape will not always, or necessarily, intrude on valued people-place relationships.

6.7 Experiencing the weather-world

Many of the embodied, affective experiences of landscape discussed within the interviews were related to the weather. Extreme or unusual weather, in particular, alerts people to the different sensations upon the body and affects their experience of the landscape. For instance:

> *"We went out Good Friday morning just for a short walk and we didn't go far, and we were walking in snow drifts up this hill, it was just amazing. Because it was so cold, the air, you had to keep turning your back on it to get your breath, it was that sharp. It really was a cold wind"* (Jane, Askam).

> *"I was running with the running group along to Dunnerholme Rock on Sunday and it was really hard work because we were going into a fierce wind. The others were reluctant to turn back, basically because their apps told them they hadn't gone as far as usual, but I said to them, we've worked just as hard as normal, it's just because of the wind. And we absolutely flew back"* (Charlie, Askam).

The weather was talked about as having a strong influence over the general atmosphere of the place and is thus highlighted as part of a place's affect. In Mullion in particular, what is typically perceived as 'bad weather' is valued in itself as part of the place's character. Although Mullion is known for being warm and sunny in summer and for having particularly good light levels, it is also frequently hit by strong winds, rains, storms and low-lying sea fog. The stormy weather (along with other aspects, such as the isolated location relatively removed from principal economic centres and transport connections) can be seen as linking to a perception of the Lizard peninsula as particularly 'wild' and 'untamed'; a perception which forms part of its allure for people who value its remote and rural character. However, all weather types were talked about as having a noticeable emotional effect on people, inspiring a mixture of joy, depression, awe and what might be described as pride:

> *"It's like a different place in some respects [in different weathers]. I say to people in the summer, you really ought to come here in the winter, because it's just awesome sitting down [at the harbour] watching the waves come over the wall…You see it in a whole different light again"* (Kimberley, Mullion).

> *"I mean if the fog comes in for like a week it gets really, I get claustrophobic, I get really down about it. But if it's really wet and windy I love it. But equally when it's sunny it really lifts my mood. I guess if you live in a city you're not so affected by things like that"* (Emma, Mullion).

> *"But of course they're very dramatic to see, the waves, you're drawn to them aren't you, to go and see them. And the noise of them"* (Helen, Mullion).

> *"And you can see the fog roll up through the valley, you know, because sometimes we get 3 or 4 days of fog continuously here. But, again, I don't mind it. I love it"* (Nicola, Mullion).

Although 'good' weather was mentioned in the interviews as adding beauty to the landscape (particularly in interviews that were held on sunny days), it is notable that, as the above quotes show, 'bad' weather was also appreciated as part of the place's character and affective value. The variability and unpredictability of weather also affects the way in which place is perceived from one moment to the next, giving the landscape a certain uniqueness and attraction for repeat engagement with it. For instance, participants picked up on the rhythms of the days and seasons, and on constant changes due to the weather and light:

> *"And I like marking the changes. Just the changes of the season, like this year you're thinking spring's really late, these don't have many buds on yet. And you have certain periods of the year which bring the most intense pleasure to you - so that time in June when the green is still very light and pale and delicate"* (Roz, Askam).

> *"You can never get bored of coming down here and looking at the view, it's never the same. The light, the boats, the waves, the sea, the clouds, everything changes"* (Alan, Mullion).

Weather is generally associated with natural forces and exposure to its variability appears to be valued as an element of a specifically rural place identity – as Emma

alluded in saying, "*I guess if you live in a city you're kind of not so affected by things like that*". However, unlike associations between 'nature' and rurality that characterise rural places as timeless, appreciation of 'nature's weather may actually help highlight a relational perspective of place as continually changing and in flux. The integral role of the weather in shaping residents' experiences of place connects to post-natural concepts that stress humans' interrelatedness and entanglement with the objects and networks of the wider world, in which all things - human and non-human - are related and co-constitutive of each other (Haraway, 1988; Ingold, 2000; Latour, 1993; Whatmore, 2002). Ingold's writings on the perception of the environment and the 'weather-world' are particularly useful for thinking this through. In '*The Perception of the Environment'* (2000)*,* Ingold argues that conventional depictions of Earth as a *globe* have led to an artificial separation between humans and the environment, as humans are conceptually placed on the surface of the world and are, therefore, portrayed as external to it. Ingold instead advocates a *spherical* perspective, in which the world does not lie beneath our feet but surrounds us. Humans are thereby reasserted as inhabitants rather than exhabitants of the world. In his later work, *'Being Alive'* (2011), Ingold develops these ideas, arguing that the 'weather-world' forms an important part of this spherical existence. For, "to inhabit the open is not to be stranded on the outer surface of the earth but to be caught up in the substantial flows and aerial fluxes of…the *weather-world*" (Ingold, 2011, p.96). In this way, air, earth and body are intimately connected, emphasising the embodied nature of encounters with weather and landscape:

> "To feel the air and walk on the ground is not to make external, tactile contact with our surroundings but to mingle with them. In this mingling, as we live and breathe, the wind, light and moisture of the sky bind with the substances of the earth in the continual forging of a way through the tangle of lifelines that comprise the land"
>
> (Ingold, 2011, p.115).

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter began by presenting traces of what might be described as 'timeless' representations of a rural idyll within participants' accounts. These were, however, problematised by highlighting instances of alternative understandings, which demonstrate that conceptualisations of place-temporality are neither naively, nor necessarily coherently, held by individuals. Rather, there are a number of factors that affect relationships with place and perceptions of its temporal nature, including personal memories, embodied experiences and cognitive evaluations. These factors will be further drawn out as the thesis progresses.

The complexity of people-place relationships means that ideas about how places have or have not changed - and should or should not change in the future - are variously constituted both across and within individuals. Their formation depends on combinations of discursive, experiential and 'rational' influences, which are manifested differently in particular contexts and situations. The implications of this for understanding perceptions of non-'natural' structures in rural landscapes will be considered in Chapters Eight to Ten. However, it is already becoming apparent that, since place and landscape are discursively and directly experienced in multiple and context-dependent ways, the relationship between landscape values and attitudes towards physical changes such as windfarms is more nuanced and complex than explanations of visual incongruence (see 2.4.2) suggest.

This chapter has shown how personal experiences and rural representations (two aspects of rural place experience identified in Fig. 3.1) play a role in shaping how residents relate to place and construct versions of its identity. Discussions so far have, for the most part, centred on perceptions of, and encounters with, the materiality of place and landscape. However, as Fig. 3.1 suggests, social memories and practices are also significant in the construction, practice and experience of place identities; and

thus to how place-temporality and change is perceived. Chapter Seven will now, therefore, discuss these elements in greater depth through a consideration of residents' experiences, perceptions and actions relating to the social aspects of rural place and social change.

Chapter 7. Social memories and practices: 'Community', local history and experiencing change

7.1 Introduction

Chapter Six demonstrated how rural representations and personal experiences are implicated in rural place attachment and identity processes. However, as was established in Chapters Two and Three and represented in Fig. 3.1, these processes are also influenced by the shared memories and social practices that infuse everyday rural lives. This chapter will explore these elements of rural place identity by focusing on understandings of 'community' and local history, and on narratives of social change, within the case studies. Exploring these elements develops understanding about how social relationships with a community's past contribute to the construction of place identity and how social changes to rural places are perceived (including in relation to physical changes).

'Community' was perhaps the strongest theme emerging from the interviews regarding people's attachment to place. Given the rural setting of each case study, I had expected the surrounding landscape to be the aspect of place thought about most positively but, whilst this was highly valued, for several participants it was 'community' that was most important. The majority of interviewees in all three case studies talked about their village as having a strong 'sense of community', which formed a prime attraction of the place. Furthermore, when interviewees were asked about how the place had changed, narratives of social and community change - linked to increases in population and housing - dominated responses. In contrast, few people spoke about the nearby windfarm as a significant or prominent change. This observation should not be taken as evidence of the windfarm being an uncritically accepted part of the place (although many participants did perceive it positively or indifferently; see Chapter Ten),

but it does indicate that social relations form an integral part of place experiences, and that changes to these may have a more direct impact on everyday lives than physical changes to the peripheral landscape. Perceptions of social and community change, and the implications of these for constructions of place identity, thus form an important part of the investigation.

The importance placed on a sense of community was often linked to perceptions about the history and rural nature of the villages, thereby reiterating particular elements of rural place identity. As discussed in 2.2.3, traditional concepts of community have strong connotations with rurality, and popular ideas about the countryside include notions of close-knit, traditional place-based communities, as well as picturesque 'natural' landscapes (Halfacree, 1995; Jones, 1995; Liepins, 2000a; Neal & Walters, 2008). 'Community' is a complex and contested term, however. The wealth of literature on 'community' has stressed the socially constructed form of the concept and highlighted its highly political and problematic nature. As a concept through which identities are constructed, contested and performed (Liepins, 2000b), 'community' is characterised by particular shapings of unity that can obscure the heterogeneity of rural society and plurality of identities, creating dividing lines and excluding rural 'others' (Cloke et al., 1997; Cloke et al., 2000; Day, 1998; Little, 1999; Milbourne, 1997).

As this chapter will demonstrate, 'community' was generally spoken of as a positive term and as something to protect and enhance. However, there were also traces of the complexities and difficulties inherent in the concept, as participants alluded to local conflicts over issues, divisions between and within social groups (the 'communities within communities' (Day, 1998)), and the difficulty of 'fitting in' or being accepted as 'insiders'. Although I do not explicitly focus on these issues, they form an important political backdrop to the discussions throughout the chapter, particularly in reference to belonging (7.2); the need to maintain a sense of community (7.3.2 and 7.4.2); and the role of local history in shaping identities (7.5.2).

I begin by considering how social identity and 'belonging' are variously linked to residential longevity, as perceptions of rural identity and belonging are often (but not always; see 7.3.2) based on the length of time people or families have lived in the area (Bell, 1994; Day, 1998). The chapter's subsequent themes were apparent within all three case studies but, since local specificities resulted in the issues being expressed to different degrees, each village is used to demonstrate particular points with sufficient contextual depth. Hence, Askam is used in section 7.3 to explore: the role of social memories in shaping identities (particularly for lifelong residents); perceptions of community change; and the ways in which 'community' is performed and perpetuated through social practices. Section 7.4 then focuses on Mullion to show how some people (particularly in-migrants) perceive community to be a key part of rural living and put considerable effort into practicing it. The implications of such ideas and actions for perceptions of demographic change and housing growth are also explored. Finally, section 7.5 uses Martham to exemplify how rural identity is, in part, conceived through ideas about the past, and how 'community' is performed through an active engagement with local history and heritage (Mackenzie, 2004; 2006; Mah, 2012). The implications of this for understanding attitudes to change are also discussed.

7.2 Residential longevity and belonging: 'Locals' and in-migrants

Perceived divisions between 'locals' and in-migrants (as well as other social factions) within rural communities are common in popular discourse and have been noted within the literature (e.g. Bell, 1994; Liepins, 2000a) - although these categories have also been problematized and their boundaries revealed as blurred and fluid (Day, 1998; Halfacree, 1995). Evidence of conceptual divisions between 'locals' and 'incomers' emerged throughout the case studies (see 7.3.2 in particular). These themes are briefly explored here because notions of 'local' and 'incomer' influence perceptions of socially-

based identities (both of self and other) and are thus a vital part of understanding people's relationship to place. More pertinently, they also relate to some assumptions in the literature regarding links between place attachment type and attitudes to change, which are to some extent challenged in subsequent chapters.

Residential longevity is an important factor in perceptions of belonging. Theorists of place attachment have long argued that emotional bonds to place strengthen with time (Hummon, 1992; Lewicka, 2011b; Relph, 1976; Riley, 1992; Smaldone, 2006). However, within my interviews the *strength* of individuals' place attachment did not necessarily correlate with length of residence (though the nature of this attachment did vary, as other studies have found; see 2.3). In terms of social attachment, most participants talked about their village as having a relatively good 'sense of community' and felt accepted by fellow members, regardless of their own length of residence (though this may be a result of positivity bias in the sample; see 5.4.3). However, as 6.4 showed in relation to constructions of Cornishness in Mullion, 'true' belonging appears to depend on a much longer time-scale, requiring at least birth in, but ideally longer ancestral links to, the area. Such constructions thus entail distinctions between 'incomers' and 'locals' – reflecting issues of belonging and otherness inherent in community identifications (Cloke et al., 1995a; Liepins, 2000b):

> *"When my parents moved up here, we were off-comers[12]. I'm still classed slightly as an off-comer because they don't know my grandparents"* (Jim, Askam).

> *"I'm a Londoner and I'm still looked askance at. I'll never be part of this village to the extent that people who have always lived in the village or in the area are. Unless you've got grandparents buried in the graveyard you don't really fit in"* (Kevin, Martham).

> *"I understand that I am an incomer. I'll never be anything but an incomer because I wasn't born here"* (Barbara, Mullion).

[12] 'Off-comer' is a local term for an incomer.

Although interviewees often identified themselves as ‘locals’ or ‘incomers’, a person’s perception of their own identity may differ from that assigned to them by others. This assigned identity is not necessarily fixed but may be determined by the particular situation/context within which it is being constructed, as definitions of ‘localness’ are shaped by people’s own life-courses and other-place experiences. In other words, identity, like place, is relational (Massey, 2004). Whilst non-birth residents may feel (perhaps accurately) that they will ‘never be anything but an incomer’, this does not necessarily mean that they cannot be ‘accepted’ as a valuable member of the community. As this chapter (see 7.3.2 in particular) shall show, others’ acceptance of a particular person’s belonging commonly depends upon perceptions of that person’s actions and willingness to engage in community activities. Acceptance is, therefore, often based on a performance of ‘rural’ and ‘community’ values, rather than residential longevity. This finding reflects Bell’s (1994) study of the pseudonymous village of Childerley, in which he demonstrates how rural identities are based partly on ‘knowing’ the countryside, the community and ‘country ways’.

Whilst the interviews indicated that place attachment strength is not necessarily determined by length of residence, they do suggest that the nature of attachments and the way in which they are expressed can differ between ‘locals’ and in-migrants due to the social ties that build up over time and the influence of personal and familial histories (c.f. Hummon, 1992; Lewicka, 2011a). Much of the attachments to place described in this and the previous chapter were consciously recognised and articulated. Many residents spoke passionately about the place where they lived, explaining why they liked it by listing its benefits and the aspects they loved. However, some lifelong residents with long family connections to the area found it more difficult to articulate their reasons for liking, and staying in, the area. Their continued residence in the place was not necessarily a conscious and rational decision, but more a result of it being what they have always known. These people still expressed strong place attachment, but admitted that the reasons behind this attachment are less rationalised, relating

more to personal and familial histories than to an active appreciation of the material qualities of a place:

> *"I think you just take it for granted, don't you, when you live somewhere" (*Ethel, Askam).

> *"I don't know, it's just somewhere where I've always lived and I've never ever thought about moving anywhere else really" (*Wendy, Martham).

> *"Well, I've lived here all my life. I've never known anything different"* (Derek, Mullion).

This observation reiterates assertions in the literature that there are multiple types of place attachment. The type of attachment apparent in the accounts of the lifelong residents quoted above is indicative of what Hummon (1992) refers to as 'taken-for-granted rootedness', and Lewicka (2011a) re-terms as 'traditional attachment', which is based on a combination of family-ties and an un-reflective acceptance of place (see Table 2.1). This traditional attachment contrasts with 'ideological rootedness' (Hummon, 1992), or 'active attachment' (Lewicka, 2011a), which are attachments based on self-conscious decisions to live in a place (this can include lifelong residents but tends to be associated with in-migrants). Lewicka suggests that traditionally-attached people tend to be most conservative and least open to change, since they wish to keep the place in the same state as they remember from childhood. However, whilst there were instances of this in interviews (particularly regarding community change), lifelong residents often recognised the need for change in order for the place 'to live' (see 7.3.2) and did not necessarily object to recently-introduced wind turbines (see Chapter Ten).

7.3 Askam

7.3.1 Social memories, family-ties and tradition

Interviewees generally characterised Askam as a traditional, tight-knit, friendly community, and much of this identity is shaped and perpetuated by a variety of social

memories, passed down through family stories, village anecdotes and folklore (as well as by more formalised means, such as the local history society). This assertion is not to suggest that the community is unified and harmonious, since divisions and frictions between groups also emerged. It is also likely that those less enamoured with the 'sense of community' were not represented within the interviews (see 5.4.3). However, what is of interest here is the way that positive renditions of 'community' formed a key part of place attachment for many residents and were based on, and perpetuated by, social memories and notions of tradition within the village. These processes were also apparent in Martham and Mullion, but in Askam, genealogical histories shaping notions of social history and 'community' continuity (or decline) were particularly prominent due to the strong presence of 'old Askam families'.

For the most part, participants saw Askam as a friendly, caring place to live (though most long-term residents also perceived the sense of community as having declined somewhat in recent years; see 7.3.2). The friendliness of people was referred to as a particular reason for liking the village by a range of participants, although exclusionary tendencies were also apparent in stories about the difficulty of being accepted as an 'off-comer'. For instance, William talked about how his mother was stoned by local women when she first married and moved to the village because she was 'stealing' one of 'their' men. More recently, another 'off-comer', Lisa, had received verbal abuse when first entering a local pub. Despite the negativity of such stories, however, they were usually told as 'amusing' anecdotes and used to emphasise the close-knit nature of the community as a positive, or characteristic, feature of small villages.

Many Askam interviewees portrayed the village as traditionally having a 'rough' reputation in the local area. Often this description was accompanied by a sense that this reputation has changed somewhat in recent years and no longer necessarily holds true, but, nevertheless, this characterisation remains present in local discourse. Askam

was described as traditionally a place with a strong culture of drinking, fighting and local rivalry:

> *"Like the Vulcan* (a former pub). *I mean that was one of the scariest places I ever went into!* (Laughs)...*You know, all the characters go there"* (Claire, Askam).

> *"I mean the competition between Millom*[13] *and Askam was rife. Always. In rugby and all the rest of it. The fights between Askam and Millom were unbelievable, the two mining communities. So there was rivalry from the mines and rivalry from the football"* (Trevor, Askam).

This reputation, as one older resident pointed out, has no doubt been embellished upon over the years, but it is certainly recognised by lifelong residents and newcomers alike. Although such descriptions of Askam's reputation could be construed as negative, there was a certain affection for the idea of Askam as 'tough'. As one lifelong resident, Jim, commented, "*I think the people that live in Askam are quite proud of it. Do you know what I mean?".* Narratives of Askam as slightly 'rough around the edges', in contrast to representations of 'chocolate-box' villages, were often relayed with a feeling of pride in, and warmth for, the village:

> Jean: *"But on the whole I don't think I'd really change that much. I was thinking about this and I was thinking, well, would I change anything? And I wouldn't really. I was thinking it couldn't be like a pretty village in the Cotswolds, because it's not that kind of place. You know…it was built up from mines and it was rough. And there were some rough people who had really, really hard lives here. So it's never going to be some chocolate box village."*
>
> RW: *"It would be a different place, wouldn't it?"*
>
> Jean: *"It would absolutely be. I mean the people would be different, and I wouldn't want that."*

Such narratives were often accompanied by stories about strong village 'characters', examples of community support, and praise for the friendliness and kindness of other residents. Descriptions of Askam's community were thus accompanied by a sense of group solidarity and self-reliance, characterised not only by people supporting each

[13] Millom is a town across the Duddon estuary from Askam, which is also an ex-mining community.

other but also by 'sticking together' despite internal conflicts or misdemeanours that may occur:

> Lisa (talking to her husband, Graham): *"I was just explaining about the sort of village justice. There is an element of people not reporting stuff isn't there? And people just having quiet words here and there."*
>
> Graham: *"Well it'll be like that won't it, because that's 'village' for you isn't it. If you're grassing on one, you're grassing on them all."*

Lisa and Graham's discussion about 'village justice' echoes wider ideas about rural areas as sites of condoned deviance, where there is a perceived lack of authoritative social intervention, and informal regulation is instead carried out by neighbours (Neal & Walters, 2007). 'Village justice' can thus be interpreted as a determinant of rural identity and as one way of practicing 'community' in a specifically rural context. As Lisa recognised, however, it also engenders a number of issues, such as perpetuating traditional, gendered notions of male-dominant rural communities (and traditional mining communities, see McDowell & Massey, 1984), where violence may be hidden or overlooked (Panelli et al., 2004; Woods, 2011). Narratives about Askam implicitly portrayed the village as a historically gendered space in which certain community sites, such as the pubs and rugby club, were associated with drinking, fighting and masculinity. Whilst not quite so prevalent today, traces of this continue to prevail. For instance, the verbal abuse Lisa received upon first entering a local pub, and the perception of another as 'one of the scariest places' that Claire had ever been to, indicates that some female residents feel intimidated by the traditionally masculine and 'local' spaces of village pubs (Campbell, 2000).

Whilst not always specifically referred to by participants, the portrayal of a 'tough' element of Askam's identity was linked to the village's origin as a mining community and the idea that past inhabitants had to endure hardship and dangerous working conditions. Current residents who have long connections to the area talked about the arduous conditions of life during the mining days with a sense of pride in the resilience

of their ancestors. Some newcomers also appeared to relish this characterisation. The pride associated with this representation of Askam is, I suggest, linked to the idea of solidarity and a resilient, tightly-knit community where people 'look out for each other' and provide mutual support in order to persevere through difficult times. Although now historically-based in Askam's case, this notion is reflective of ideas about (gendered) readings of 'community' in other mining villages, or similar working-class, single-industry settlements, where community identity is shaped around the dangerous, manual work that characterises it (Mah, 2012; McDowell & Massey, 1984).

Until recently, economic change in Askam facilitated a certain continuity in community life. In the years following the closure of the mines, Askam remained relatively self-contained in terms of economic opportunities, with many people continuing to be employed locally. A major employer from 1953 until 1996 was K-Shoe, which had a factory in the village employing around 1000 people at its peak. For many people, the K-Shoe factory was a significant part of village life during this time, employing a large proportion of the labour force and contributing to community life through the K-Shoe Sports and Social Club. The retention of jobs within the village meant that, as in the mining years, many people lived and worked together, and older residents spoke nostalgically about a camaraderie and sense of community that they perceive as having deteriorated since the departure of K-Shoe. The presence of the factory, as well as other industries in the village, thus provided an element of continuity from the days of the mines. As one participant, Richard, described it, "*it was a very tight-knit community, very like a mining community probably. Well it was a mining community without the mines".* The association in residents' minds between K-Shoe and 'community' was also apparent in discussions about community change, as the factory's closure was frequently blamed for contributing to the loss of local pubs and perceived decline in community (see 7.3.2).

These narratives about 'working-class' solidarity comprised an integral part of perceptions of community in Askam (at least for some people) in a way that was not evident in the other two case studies of Martham and Mullion. Although the histories of Martham and Mullion are also rooted in primary industries (fishing and farming), Askam's more recent origins, and the dominance of mining in social memory, gives rise to a stronger identification with this aspect of community identity. Identification with Martham's and Mullion's roots as traditional farming and fishing communities, whilst still present, has diversified and become integrated with newer conceptions of the villages (e.g. of Mullion as a tourist destination), particularly as middle-class in-migrants have moved in. The mining aspect of Askam's identity, on the other hand, has a greater presence in current local discourse and memory, and this is perpetuated by the continued presence of 'original' families in the village. Although most participants were not old enough to have worked in the mines, many spoke with pride about ancestors or associates who had lived and worked through what was portrayed as a challenging and arduous time (see also Wheeler, 2014, Appendix A). This is reminiscent of research highlighting the presence of nostalgia surrounding imagined heydays and an increased interest in industrial heritage (Edwards & Llurdés i Coit, 1996; Laviolette & Baird, 2011; Mah, 2012; Orange, 2008). Here, this nostalgia is shown to be perpetuated by social memories, present-day narratives, and practices that uphold particular values of community.

The existence of extended families with long connections to Askam was perceived by some interviewees as one reason behind the community's close-knit nature. For many lifelong residents, much of the attachment they felt towards Askam derived from stories and memories relating to their family's historical connection with the area (the same was also true for lifelong Mullion and Martham residents). These participants often pointed out sites associated with their ancestors, revealing these aspects of place to be important anchors for perceptions of personal histories and 'belonging', as well as

social memory. For instance, William talked about his genealogical link to the mining past:

> *"Well my dad's from Askam and our family lived in Askam for generations before that. You know, like with the mines and the ironworks….In 1865 they decided they would put this ironworks up. And er, whichever grandparent it would be, he was actually in charge of some of the building of the ironworks. He worked on the ironworks chimney…And then once the ironworks got going, two of my predecessors, like me great, great whatever-they-were grandparents, one worked driving the ironworks train onto the mainline and his brother was the fireman. And they were so very hard times that they used to throw coal off the trains so that kids could pick it up; to keep the fires burning at home"* (William, Askam).

Older residents talked about their own memories of the mining industry. Whilst not old enough to have worked in the mines, Wilfred and Edward were children when the industry was still operating and had relatives who worked within it. Their recollections of related experiences emphasised their local knowledge and personal embeddedness in place, which reiterated the authenticity and legitimacy of their 'belonging':

> *"I went down Nigel pit when I was, I would be 8. Now I only went down there once, my dad was foreman at Roanhead mines [and had to check the ropes on a Sunday]… So I went with him and went down the pit. And they're all lit with candles, all inside the pit. These candles, they're as thick as your thumb and were just stuck in a fancy little holder. And they just stuck them in the rock face where it was convenient"* (Edward, Askam).

> *"They pumped through the day for keeping the water down, because apparently they'd be inundated with water… And we called it the red river. That's right down the end, where the Nigel is, and I would say that was getting pumped through out the Nigel…And we always called it the red river. It'd come out as red as you like…If the pumps they had - these were the lads that told me themselves - if the pumps shut down for 15 minutes or half an hour you were up to your knees in water. That's how much water there was"* (Wilfred, Askam).

Such narratives contribute to the perpetuation of cultural meaning and social memory regarding the mines within Askam, thereby "enabl[ing] the maintenance of dominant understandings about the community" (Panelli, 2001, p.164). They also demonstrate the entwined nature of personal and social memory (Jones, 2011; Jones & Garde-Hansen, 2012; Setten, 2005) and are indicative of how memories can serve as anchors

of identity and belonging within place attachment processes (Cooper Marcus, 1992; Lewicka, 2008).

Although I have argued that genealogical links form part of the construction of Askam's particular 'sense of community', there are also negative connotations associated with the presence of large, established families in the area. As well as the exclusionary nature of the community in the past, participants talked about Askam inhabitants as traditionally 'inbred' and insular. This was evident in a conversation between James and Wilfred (who were introduced earlier; see Box 6.3):

> James: *"But the thing was, I didn't realise, what was that thing they used to say out there [in the Barrow shipyards]? If you kick one in Askam…"*
>
> Wilfred: *"You kick the lot."*
>
> James: *"You kick the lot. And the number of times I've had to be very careful, like you're going to say something about you and I realise that this chap's related to you somewhere. You know, there's an awful lot of that in Askam."*
>
> Wilfred: *"Not quite as bad now."*
>
> James: *"Not quite as bad now because there's been masses of incomers."*

Such perceptions, which are characteristic of discourses about remote, rural areas as insular, parochial and culturally 'backward' (Cloke, 1997; Halfacree, 1995), were also present in the Mullion and Martham interviews but to a lesser extent; perhaps partly due to the timing of social change in each village. Whilst Martham and Mullion (and to some extent, Askam) have been steadily growing and receiving influxes of incomers since the post-war period, Askam's most significant housing development, Parklands[14], was not completed until more recently in 1992. It is also perhaps related to the 'hypermarginality' (Urry, 1995) of the Cumbrian coast and perceptions of the Furness peninsula as a '40-mile cul-de-sac' (Townsend & Westcott, 2012). Thus, although Askam's reputation as insular and exclusionary is changing (and Askam is becoming

[14] Parklands was originally planned for 250 houses, though more have been added since (MacLean 2000).

more popular as a choice of residence), it remains a more prominent feature in social memory and local place perceptions than in the other two case studies.

7.3.2 Perceptions of community change

Perceptions of community in Askam are formed in relation to its specific socio-economic histories and contexts. The village's mining origins, and the subsequent centrality of social relations based around employment in the K-Shoe factory, has helped shape constructions of community identity as tight-knit and resilient, at least for long-term residents. However, the strength of such constructions is, arguably, now weakening due to population growth and diversification and a decrease in employment opportunities within the village (most people commute to Barrow or elsewhere for work). Although most interviewees feel Askam still has a better sense of community than other (particularly urban) areas, older residents spoke about the 'old days' with nostalgia and mourned what they perceive as a loss of community. Frequent references were made to memories of 'everyone knowing each other', an abundance of local shops, leaving doors unlocked, and the whole village getting involved in community activities. The village was described as still friendly and safe in comparison to other areas, but most long-term residents felt the community is 'not as good as it used to be'. This decline was largely blamed on a weakening of social ties due to K-Shoe's closure and the subsequent loss of village pubs and shops, as well as on the growth of the village. This recurring narrative was particularly evident in Richard's account; see Box 7.1.

Box 7.1: Perceiving 'community' decline: A conversation with Richard

I interviewed Richard with his eighty-two-year-old father, Edward, at Edward's home. Both are lifelong residents and Edward showed me photographs and spoke at length about his memories of growing up in Askam; living there through the last years of the mining industry and World War II; and his experiences of change within the village. This led to a conversation about how Richard and Edward perceive the 'sense of community' to have declined over the years.

Edward is clearly nostalgic about 'the old days', which he depicts as a time when

everyone knew and cared for each other, 'pulling together' in times of hardship and need. Whilst Edward does not articulate the reasons behind this perceived decline, Richard is more reflective about it, acknowledging both the positive and negative effects that social change has had on the village:

> *"If you went back to the '70s Askam was incredibly insular in terms of wrapped up in itself, off-comers being a term for people who were not from the area. And there was very much a mind-set of everybody would know, more or less, who everybody was. And with the estates - there's probably been four big estates I guess - there were the small estates that they built, the one opposite the Post Office and the one opposite where the residential home is. Then there were new in-fills and then Headlands by Duddon Road, and Parklands. Completely changed the mix of it - probably not for a bad thing. But it actually brought an influx of people so that broke it down a lot quicker. So it's not the same groups of family names, there's a bigger set of people from here, there and everywhere. So Askam was like, how would you describe? It was somewhere, I don't know, I think I'll stop at that point."*
>
> *RW: "Different dynamics sort of thing?"*
>
> *"Yeah. So it had its own, yeah inbred you might say, in terms of who the people were. And there were distinct areas in the village with their own character. Like the Lots being its own little area up here on its own, which was isolated from the rest of Askam."*

Richard goes on to discuss his previous experiences as a member of the parish council; particularly the difficulties he faced regarding complaints and friction within the village and the efforts that the parish council put into supporting the local community and economy when the K-Shoe factory closed. Richard found that during this time people started to become less willing to get involved in the community and commit money for communal purposes. His perception of the community today is thus formed in relation to these contexts and is constructed as negative compared to the community of the past:

> *"If you look at the public spiritedness, community as a group together - the pubs are going so there's less and less interaction with people - and the only time they come out is if something badly goes wrong and then you see a degree of public spiritedness. But most of the time it's just self-interest."*

Despite this negative comparison with the past and recognition of various issues, both Richard and Edward continue to remain attached to the place and assert its positive community aspects in relation to other areas. Thus, although the changes they observe are somewhat lamented, they feel enough of this 'community' character remains to justify its inclusion in their identification with Askam as a rural place.

Newer residents of Askam also valued the 'friendly' nature of the village. The 'sense of community', whilst perceived to have declined, thus remains a central element of the place's attraction for many residents. This aspect of village identity is reiterated and actively perpetuated through 'community' sites and practices, including everyday interactions, traditional events, and the activities of village organisations (c.f. Liepins,

2000a; Panelli, 2001, see 2.2.3). There are a number of community groups within Askam, such as the local history group, Women's Institute, and 'Old Age Pensioners' club, and other activities include 'old-time dancing', band-playing, rugby, football, cricket, and bowls. These provide social spaces for a "convergence of locality and sociality" (Neal & Walters, 2008, p.285), where place-specific rural identities are enacted.

Plate 7.1: Symbols of community decline? The old K-Shoe factory and a former pub. Now disused, these sites act as reminders of a former time in which Askam was perceived to have a greater 'sense of community' than today

The annual carnival parade was frequently highlighted by interviewees as an important event that 'brings people out', encourages a range of people and businesses to get involved, and perpetuates a 'traditional' sense of community and 'community spirit':

> *"It's tremendous. And I hope that that keeps going when I'm gone. Because there's not many villages that still do it, and that's what I like about this place. It is, although we have got the windmills and we're quite modern, these little traditions keep going, the pigeon-racing and the parades and that. I couldn't live anywhere else I don't think"* (Jim, Askam).

For Jim, this aspect of traditional community is part of his emotional bond with Askam. As we saw in a similar quote from Jim in 6.3, the presence of 'tradition' is linked to his attraction to Askam as a somewhat timeless rural place. Importantly for him, the continuation of historical (rural) activities, such as pigeon-racing and carnival parades, maintain a sense of this traditional and timeless aspect of Askam's identity. These activities can thus be described as staged performances that act to forge links with the

past and perpetuate dominant elements of place identity, whilst accommodating a certain amount of change (see also 7.5.1). The presence of large families with long connections to Askam assists in this process by providing an element of perceived legitimacy and authenticity:

> *"I mean if you've still got the core families who continue to live in the village and produce children who then live in the village, there will be an element of history and an element of, sort of village life that will continue"* (Lisa, Askam).

The presence of 'core families' in the village was generally perceived to be a positive thing by participants, who saw people with long familial connections to Askam as providing an element of continuity with the past. However, as well as contributing to perceptions of the community as insular, the emphasis placed by some residents on longevity as an indicator of belonging can lead to divisions within groups, highlighting the relational, political and contested nature of 'community' (Day, 1998; Liepins, 2000a; Valentine, 2001). Some older residents who mourned the loss of community perceived particular groups to be lacking in 'community spirit'. This characterisation was sometimes generalised as a difference between 'locals' and 'off-comers' and even as a spatial difference between those living in 'old Askam' and those living on the newer Parklands housing estate (though not only 'off-comers' live on Parklands):

> *"Once upon a time, up until thirty years ago I would say, everybody knew everybody else. Good morning so and so, good morning. Everybody knew everybody. From then on, with some people coming in to the village now, it doesn't appear that they, they're different people. They don't want to know you as such. They're alright, don't get me wrong, they say hello, but they don't want to get involved"* (Wilfred, Askam).

> *"Its character unfortunately has suffered a bit [from growing in size], because it's not the tight-knit community it was… I mean, they won't get involved. Whereas before all the village would get involved with any of the sports and all the carnivals and everything. Now it's, they go to Barrow or they go elsewhere. They don't want village life. They want to live in a village but not [take part]"* (Trevor, Askam).

> *"The people up at Parklands don't get involved, it's different to down in the main part of the village. The pubs in the village have all closed, which is sad. I would've thought people at Parklands would've used the one at the*

> *Lots but no, that closed as well. So I think the sense of community's going a bit"* (Charlie, Askam).
> *"It's quite different. But still people remain friendly. Except, there's a big estate [Parklands] on what we call The Lots, where there's a lot of new houses, new people coming in. They're not villagers necessarily and they don't react like we do…They're town people, that's all"* (Ethel, Askam).

As these quotes reveal, certain groups are portrayed by some interviewees as somehow 'different' and not suited to village or 'rural' life because they are unwilling to get involved. 'Getting involved' is thus rendered a defining feature of 'authentic' rural living. Distinctions between groups were not, therefore, always based simply on length of residence or local/off-comer status. More often, they were based on perceptions about people's willingness to contribute to village (rural) life. Some people pointed out individual 'off-comers' who they believe do contribute to various community activities, and several of the above quotes are from people who could be described as technically 'off-comers' due to not having been born in the area. The extent of a person's community-related actions is thus deemed a more relevant indicator of belonging than their length of connection with the village *per se*, revealing a distinctively performative element to constructing community and place identity. This finding was also evident in the perceptions of Martham and Mullion residents.

Despite negative sentiments of community decline, narratives of social change should not be seen as people universally yearning for an unchanged vision of the past or resenting the presence of newcomers in the village. Whilst there may be an element of this nostalgia, social change was often referred to in Askam as an inevitable 'sign of the times' and was recognised (sometimes by the same individuals who mourn the decline in community) as a necessary and positive phenomenon. Although past perceptions of Askam may have portrayed it as insular and exclusionary, this is generally no longer thought to be the case. Several interviewees talked about how they see the growth of the village as a positive thing because it has encouraged diversity and new ideas, enabling the village to continue 'living':

> *"Oh I think it's great, yeah. Absolutely. It keeps the village life going doesn't it? I mean a lot of people would like it to stay the same, and I understand that, you know, 'these off-comers coming in', but I don't think you can do that. I think you need to breathe life into a place, because otherwise it would die…Personally I think it's great. I mean you get a lot of different people coming in, different ways, different attitudes and I think it's good. And they seem to mix in alright… I think you need it. You do. Financially and for the economy of the area, I think you do need it"* (Jean, Askam).

> *"The village has grown, with the new housing estate. It changes the dynamics when people move in…. But places have to change don't they"* (Hannah, Askam).

> *"And they go 'those bloody houses that have been built'. I say well, without them houses you wouldn't have a proper bus service, shops, doctors' surgery. You'd be back in the past"* (James, Askam).

These positive evaluations of growth echo findings elsewhere that suggest rural housing developments can be supported by local people who see them as bringing in people who help to 'keep the village going' (Phillips, 2002, see also 6.4.2). Perceptions of social change are thus nuanced and shaped, to a certain extent, by emotive recollections of how the place used to be (which may be more positively remembered than experienced at the time), but they are also rationalised according to recognition of the place's socio-economic and political needs. Whether social change in the form of village growth is seen as a mournful loss of community, or a necessary driver of economic prosperity and inclusiveness, the preferred vision of the interviewees was one of a thriving, 'living' village that has continuity with, but does not live in, the past; a vision based primarily not on the material qualities of place, but on the strength of its social relations.

7.4 Mullion

7.4.1 Performing 'community' through formal groups

The high value placed on a sense of community in Mullion was arguably even more evident than in the other two villages. An abundance of groups in the village was

frequently mentioned by interviewees as demonstrative of the active nature of the community. The exact number quoted varied between thirty and forty but, invariably, long lists of village organisations were relayed, including everything from the local Old Cornwall Society to Hand Bell Ringers. The profusion of these groups is likely to be related to Mullion's large elderly population (see Fig. 4.2), as people of this demographic are more likely to have the time (and perhaps inclination) to get involved in voluntary activities.

Enthusiasm for 'community' was expressed by a variety of interviewees but, interestingly, several who had moved to Mullion from elsewhere spoke about intentionally seeking out a village that had a large, active community. In part, this may be linked to a perception of Cornish villages as stereotypically rich in community (see 6.4), but it also highlights the relevance of prior experiences and ideas about other places in shaping individuals' place identity and attachment. The influence of these prior experiences was particularly apparent in the account of Barbara, who compared Mullion to a village in the southeast of England where she had previously lived:

> *"I moved from a village which was very small and it lost its identity very, very quickly and I know how quickly it can go. So we need to work together to keep that going. But Mullion has no problem with that. It works hard. It's got forty active groups"* (Barbara, Mullion).

Other interviewees also emphasised 'community' when explaining their attachment to Mullion and, for some, this was considered just as important as (if not more than) the physical attractiveness of the surrounding landscape:

> *"If I had to use one word to summarise what appeals to us here, ok yes it's the incredible landscape, it's the sunsets, it's everything I've described to you, but it's community. That's really what it's about"* (James, Mullion).

> *"I just love the community that's here. And to me community is really important… [The landscape] is just absolutely wonderful, but it wouldn't be the same without the people. You know, Mullion and Mullion Cove, all this is, it's all part of the package"* (Andrew, Mullion).

> *"I think one of the things that attracted us particularly to Mullion…was the community spirit. I know it's a beautiful place to live but there are lots of beautiful places to live. And the thing is there was so much happening here and such a friendly community, and so much fundraising and working for other people, that it seemed to me that I could do something useful here in my retirement"* (Philippa, Mullion).

For these participants, an active community is essential for maintaining the village's identity and is something that needs to be treasured and 'worked at'. Barbara, for instance, was expressly proud of Mullion's 'community spirit', which she sees as distinctive from other tourist-oriented villages in the area:

> *"I think we're a living working village that welcomes holidaymakers, a lot of holidaymakers. But when they're gone we still continue to, well Helford and lots of places like that, they die in the winter and we don't. In fact even more goes on in the winter because people have got the time. You know, they're not involved in the tourism in the winter. I think we're quite a unique village actually in that respect"* (Barbara, Mullion).

These narratives highlight the centrality of a 'sense of community' to particular constructions of place identity. Practices such as organising village events and getting involved in groups and activities (e.g. curating village history through the History Society; and communal gardening as part of the Horticultural Society or Mullion in Bloom) are seen as an essential part of how this sense of community is perpetuated and reproduced.

Plate 7.2: 'Mullion Garden'; created by the Mullion in Bloom Garden Club

For several participants, the presence of so many groups symbolises Mullion's sense of community. Members' voluntary actions, which are framed partly as altruistic efforts made on the behalf of the wider 'community', demonstrate willingness to get involved in village ('rural') activities and consolidate a fuller sense of being-in place. Participating in these activities strengthens individuals' relationship to both the social and material

aspects of place, thereby iterating their sense of rural belonging and identity. As Neal and Walters (2008) argue, the desire to belong to an idealised notion of a rural community requires significant labour to actualise and maintain, and voluntary groups are one mechanism to achieve this goal.

Perhaps in contrast to Askam, where interviewees felt that in-migrants generally do not 'get involved' in community activities, the impression from Mullion and Martham interviewees was that, whilst clearly there are people (both 'local' and 'incoming') who choose not to participate, in-migrants make up a significant proportion of voluntary groups (and were sometimes accused by lifelong residents of 'taking over'). This involvement is perhaps typical of residents with an active (rather than traditional) attachment to place (Lewicka, 2011a) who, having made a conscious decision to live somewhere, put deliberate effort into creating and maintaining the 'community' they seek, and into establishing a sense of belonging through behaviour rather than genealogical roots (see also 7.5.2).

Mullion's numerous community groups can be described as formal expressions of community, as they are usually relatively structured and have organising committees. However, other social relations enacted on a more everyday and less structured basis also work to perform 'community' (Liepins, 2000a). These include spontaneous conversations in the village shop or Post Office, drinking with friends at the local pub, or (for young people) simply 'hanging out'. The concern expressed by Askam residents about the loss of village pubs, and the decline in social interaction as a result, highlights the importance of such informal community spaces and forms of interaction to this performance of 'community'.

These formal and informal manifestations of 'community' are reminiscent of Putnam's (2000) use of the Yiddish distinction between *machers* and *schmoozers*. *Machers* are people - usually elites - who participate in formal community practices and *schmoozers*

are those who regularly socially interact, but on an informal basis (though there are overlaps between the two). Both type of sociality are important sources of bonding capital[15] that enable the community to achieve collective aims and access external support to help sustain the social and economic health of the village. The formal groups in particular also provide mechanisms through which people can be mobilised to act when faced with negative change (Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994; Woods, 2003a). Thus, communities with high bonding social capital might be more equipped to actively protest against unwanted developments (Putnam, 2000). The use of bonding social capital is not always a unifying 'community' process, however. This was apparent in Mullion in the form of a long-running conflict, which superficially appeared to be about maintaining access to a public footpath, but which some residents believe was actually about opposing the construction of a two-storey building by a business on the edge of the village. Considerable time and money was spent by individuals and groups within Mullion in objecting to the development, whilst others supported the business-owner's action. Both sides accused the other of underhandedness and the situation was perceived by several residents as generally unpleasant. The political and conflictual side of 'community' thus remains present despite many interviewees' idealised aspirations.

Whilst 'community' has emerged here as important, the value placed on the physical landscape should not be understated. As Chapter Six showed, interviewee accounts were rich with emotive descriptions about the quality and 'specialness' of Mullion's coastline in particular, including an emphasis on the landscape's aesthetic beauty. However, this quality was generally felt to be relatively stable and unthreatened, particularly as the area's status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was

[15] The term 'bonding' capital, as used by Putnam, refers to the value of relationships between members of a social group. It is defined in comparison to 'bridging' capital, which refers to the value of social ties between different groups. Both are forms of social capital and can be used to strengthen community cohesion, though may also have negative effects. The concept has, however, been subject to considerable critique and a number of problems identified (see Haynes, 2009).

thought to offer it some 'protection' from development. Mullion's surrounding coast and countryside were, therefore, not greatly referred to when participants were asked specifically about their feelings regarding change. The stronger focus on social, rather than landscape, change was also apparent in Askam and Martham. The possible reasons for this emphasis are discussed in 7.6.

7.4.2 Housing growth and protecting 'community'

Although this chapter has so far focused on the importance of social relations in place identity, it is important to avoid presenting these as somehow distinct, or separable, from the material qualities of place. As this section shall show, social relations are influenced by, and interrelated with, the physical setting within which they take place (and vice versa).

Planning debates over the building of new houses in rural villages are common in the UK and can prove highly contentious, with housing growth being equated with suburbanism and non-rurality (Phillips, 2002) and resistance being mobilised through formal organisations, such as the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) (see Murdoch & Lowe, 2003; Woods, 2005b; 2006). All three case study villages have grown substantially since the Second World War and this was, unsurprisingly, talked about as one of the more noticeable changes. However, attitudes towards this growth were not as negative as might be expected. Many people recognised multiple problems and benefits bound up with the issue. I focus on Mullion here, as the relatively high house prices and increase in holiday accommodation has made affordable housing and gentrification a particularly prominent issue in local discourse. However, similar issues and sentiments were also discussed in Askam and Martham.

I return for a moment to the excerpts from Barbara's account above. Barbara's emphasis is on an active, 'living' village; the health of which she later attributes partly to

diversity and population movement in terms of new (particularly young) people coming into the village. Echoing the sentiments regarding diversity in Askam, Barbara believes that this population movement (which she ascribes to nearby RNAS Culdrose) has helped Mullion to rejuvenate and avoid becoming too 'insular':

> *"I think the navy actually, again I think that's what helps Mullion to be unique. Because it's been used to people coming and going from the navy. Because otherwise, I mean some of the villages haven't had that so are quite insular. St. Keverne I think is a little bit like that"* (Barbara, Mullion).

On the whole, Barbara saw population change in Mullion as a positive phenomenon. This opinion led her to be outwardly accepting of housing that has been built since she moved to the village. However, as I walked with Barbara around the village, her acceptance emerged as dependent on her perception of a particular development's suitability and practicality for the village (see Box 7.2).

Box 7.2: Complex perceptions of housing growth: A walk with Barbara

Barbara is a retired resident who moved to Mullion twenty-five years ago. In response to my request to show me aspects that had changed in Mullion since she has known it, Barbara pointed out a number of housing developments of different types during our walk, some of which she described in more positive terms than others.

Having met in Mullion Garden (which Barbara helped to create with the Mullion in Bloom Garden Club) and discussed the significance of Mullion's sense of community for Barbara, we diverge from her planned route to visit an 'in-fill' site on an estate in the centre of the village:

> *"We're going to walk down the lane here, but I'll show you something else I hate first, we'll go the other way. And I do hate this because I don't like the way that it's not planned well, and I do think we need to be careful about that. I think that the village - I mean it can't stay still, it has to grow - but it's got to be done at a very careful pace."*

We arrive at a site where a house has been knocked down to be redeveloped as two separate dwellings. Barbara elaborates her reasons for disliking this type of in-fill development, which she believes is going to be used as holiday lets. Although the estate is relatively new and represented a significant physical change within the village when built, Barbara perceives it as performing a valuable community function in contrast to this type of infill, which she considers inappropriate:

> *"It was properties at a price that young families could afford and it is mostly occupied by young families and that keeps the school going. And we've got a senior school in the village as well and, you know, that's good. If they were all half-a-million-pound houses, those schools would go…I don't want, because we've got such a good balance I think of*

people who live here and come on holiday, if we're not careful and have too many holiday lets, the balance is wrong then. Because it's a year-round village. You need a good mix of houses but this is an infill. They knocked one bungalow down and built two on the site, and the plot next to it's going to done as well. And I just think it's overdoing it."

RW*: "So what worries you about the infill?"*

"It's just too much for the site. Those are little bungalows that older people live in and this is a no-through road, everything's got to go up there, no parking. I just can't see where planners are coming from. So it's ridiculous. But that seems to be the way that planning's going now and I just feel that it, if you did that to every house in this village that's got a small plot of land, you'd ruin it."

The quality of planning and the appropriateness of developments for particular sites are, therefore, important factors influencing Barbara's opinions. Moving on from the infill site, we re-trace our steps back to the centre of the village (characterised by old, whitewashed cottages) and make our way down a narrow public footpath, which is fenced on either side and then opens out onto a post-war bungalow estate. We are discussing another topic at this point but Barbara briefly breaks off the conversation to remark:

"Now we leave the old part of the village you see and we're going into a new built-up bit, which I don't object to at all because people have got to live. It's a reasonable bungalow estate, they're not all crammed in…I don't object to this at all. I mean it's not pretty but it's part of the village. It's not young families actually because it's not cheap enough but they're not all really old, it's sort of middle-age group. And they're part of the village and do things."

Plate 7.3: A bungalow estate in Mullion

These discussions reveal Barbara's evaluations of housing developments to be largely based on her beliefs about the type of people who will live in the houses and the benefits they will bring to the community through their use of amenities, such as the schools (although other participants referred to a negative impact on the schools in terms of capacity), and their willingness to get involved in social activities. Her main concern about the growth of the village is not related to the physical change, *per se,* but to the social changes that she fears will be brought about by an increase in holiday-specific accommodation and a subsequent decrease in year-round residents. The relative impact that material changes have on the sociality of the village (and this perception may differ between when the change is potential and when it is actualised) is thus important in determining personal responses to such changes.

One of the biggest issues that interviewees talked about regarding their concerns for the village was rural gentrification (Phillips, 2002; Smith & Phillips, 2001). Like Barbara, several residents expressed concern over the unaffordability of housing for local

(particularly young) people, and the threat to community life posed by such changes, rather than necessarily objecting to the physical impacts of village growth. As the following quotes convey, a prominent negative perception regarding housing developments was associated with an increase in second-homes and holiday-lets and an influx of wealthy 'outsiders', who are believed to be pricing out the 'locals'. Some long-term residents also linked this to a perceived decline in community. For example:

> *"There is a constantly changing community within the local village. I mean you've probably heard, 60% are holiday homes, you know, holiday lets*[16]*. So you're not really seeing the people that, you haven't really got that village community life"* (Tom, Mullion).

> *"I have mixed feelings really. If it's welcomed and something new and it's being used, I don't mind. But I hate seeing lovely little cottages being sold too expensive for local couples to buy. And people coming down from up-country, who've probably come down on holiday, like Mullion and think 'oh we'll buy a little place down here for when we retire'. And this goes on not only in Mullion but throughout Cornwall. Young couples can't afford it, to buy property. They go on about we've got to build affordable houses, but what is affordable? The majority of them, I would imagine, are bought up by people coming down from up country that are retired and have got lots of spare cash. And the local couples are still looking for a house"* (Judith, Mullion).

Personal responses to physical place-change are, therefore, highly influenced by perceptions of the change's actual and potential social impacts. As Cloke et al. (1995a, p.51) argue, people are often "reluctant to separate the issues of housing from those of social change". The potential threat housing developments can pose to rural identity (Murdoch & Lowe, 2003; Phillips, 2002) thus not only relates to their physical presence (a factor underlying popular assumptions about NIMBYism), but also to their social impact. However, if perceived to be planned appropriately, housing growth may alternatively be construed as benefitting the social sustainability and rural-community identity of a place.

The issue of housing development in Mullion demonstrates, that whilst perceptions of change are often emotive, they are also influenced by a cognitive process of

[16] According to Cornwall Council (2012), 8.2% of dwellings in Mullion are second homes.

rationalisation and consideration of socio-economic issues, which are themselves influenced by discursive and political representational practices. For instance, there was recognition by a number of interviewees that housing growth has enabled Mullion to sustain its amenities and local economy and to keep some young people in the village. So whilst individuals may object to particular planning proposals for a number of reasons (including personal, emotive associations with the site in question; see the discussion of Martham's former school in 6.5), they do not necessarily object to the principle of development and change; particularly if they believe the change is necessary to protect and enhance the social relationships that are perceived as integral to the life and identity of the place. Even emotional objections to a proposal may be put aside in favour of 'the greater good'. Thus, although the politics of housing conflicts (such as efforts to protect personal capital and 'idyll' preferences; see Milbourne, 2006; Satsangi et al., 2010; Sturzaker, 2010; Yarwood, 2002) may also be present in Mullion, interviewee accounts suggest that opposition to rural housing should not be viewed as simply arising from selfish and irrational reactions. It is also influenced by logical, politically-aware reasoning about appropriate planning and management.

7.5 Martham

7.5.1 Remembering the past and performing heritage

In all three case studies, the history of the village emerged as an important feature of its identity. All three villages have active, but relatively new, local history groups. The Martham History Group was established in 2010 and is particularly well-organised, with active members, an extensive website, and regular meetings and activities. I focus on Martham here because the discussions with residents (both members and non-members of the History Group) revealed interesting notions of local history as a way of 'knowing' the place and identifying with past inhabitants. Reproducing Martham's past also clearly emerged as a key mechanism through which people practiced 'community'

and local cultural identity and through which social memories were perpetuated (Mackenzie, 2006; Nash, 2005). Although these processes were most apparent in Martham due to the strength of its history group, similar narratives were also present in Mullion and Askam.

Not all participants displayed an active interest in the place's history themselves, but, when asked, they all felt some sort of recording of, and engagement with, the past was important. Participants generally found it difficult to identify and articulate reasons for this importance, as it was not something they had previously considered in detail. After deliberation, though, the common response was that the importance of recording history relates to a desire to understand the place's origins and highlight its continuity in spite of change. As Mark explained (in response to the question 'why do you think it's important to keep those memories recorded?'):

> *"Hmm, that's a good point, that is a good question. I don't know how to answer that. Because it means a lot to me and I think, well I know the younger people, they like to see it as well, they like to know what we got up to and they like to know how we used to do things really. That's important. Because I know I'm interested in what little I know of what the older people used to do before me. And that just keeps, that just gives you a link I suppose to the past and to the village and to what used to be"* (Mark, Martham).

Mark's initial difficulty in answering the question indicates that his interest and participation in local history practices is undertaken without close reflection. Yet, it is clearly an important aspect of his relationship with Martham and is linked both to his individual attachment to the place and his belief that village knowledge should be passed down to younger generations in order to maintain the continuity of community. Like Mark, several lifelong residents spoke about the people aspect of Martham's past as being particularly important or interesting. Participants recalled stories that had been told to them by their parents or grandparents about the everyday goings-on in the village, how things were done 'in the old days', and particular 'characters' that lived in

the village. These characters were proudly depicted as archetypal individuals who exemplified the values of 'country folk' and somehow embodied the place's identity:

> *"Oh yeah, the old characters. I mean when I was young we had no end of old characters. Some of them were quite scary really. I don't think they meant to be, but that's just how they were. They were country folk and er, yeah they used to have a right go at us lads sometimes, because that's just how they were. And I can always remember, as I got older and you got to know them a bit they would appreciate that you had learnt, and got to know them. And yeah, we've nearly lost all of them now, there's not too many left now"* (Gareth, Martham).

> *"I mean some of the old boys, when I first started going in the local pub, there was an old boy there, Harry - Harry Farmer. And he had a chair there and if anybody else went in that pub and sat in his chair he wouldn't let the landlord serve him until he got him out of that chair* (laughs)*. And that was just a normal thing. There was none of this 'oh I'll sit here, it's your hard luck', which you'd get today"* (Duncan, Martham).

Many of the memories were infused with nostalgia and romanticism (and recognised as such), but their re-imagination serves to reiterate links with past inhabitants and propagate interest in recent social history. Researching and remembering local history is thus seen as *"finding out about our forbearers and where we come from"* (Carl, Martham). This interest in social history is perhaps particularly strong among lifelong residents, who feel a personal connection to the people and place being remembered. Two lifelong residents I spoke to, Duncan and Justin, commented on their discontent with the local history group's coverage of the village's longer history, emphasising their interest in the more tangible recent past to which they feel more connected:

> *"There is quite a lot [of interest in the history group], and I think there would be a lot more if they'd done it from the beginning of the nineteenth century to now. But because a lot of them want to go right back to the fifteenth, sixteenth or seventeenth century, a lot of the old people [in the village] don't bother. And I think if they'd done it from the nineteenth century, there'd be a lot, lot more…Because I think a lot of people don't want to go back too far, but they've got so much lovely memories say from the nineteenth century and onwards. And you know, that's lovely"* (Duncan, Martham).

> Justin: *"I mean I'm part of the Martham local history group, although I'm more interested in recent history, which is a bit strange really because history is about history isn't it. But recent history interests me more - the last hundred or hundred-and-fifty years. I collect postcards of Martham, of old shops and things. I've got quite a big collection. And I think there's*

> *something nice in looking back and seeing how things were, but I'm not that interested in medieval Martham and things like that. Which some people are, and that's fair enough, you know, Bronze Age stuff and whatever."*
>
> RW: "*What do you think it is about the more recent stuff that's more interesting?"*
>
> Justin: *"Well I don't know, I think there's something romantic about it, looking back and seeing how things were a hundred years ago and all the old businesses which were in Martham."*

In addition to the local history group, memories and stories from Martham's past are shared via the Facebook group, 'Memories of Martham and surrounding Fleggs', which is used by people to share photographs of various places, people and events within Martham throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. These are invariably accompanied by comments and questions that endeavour to identify particular people and places. With nearly four hundred[17] members and regular postings, this site is a popular forum and was described by one participant as *"the best of the lot"* (Vernon, Martham). Along with other social media sites and websites, 'Memories of Martham' acts alongside more traditional forums and activities as a way in which social heritage and memories are remembered, practiced and reproduced.

One frequently mentioned history-related activity was the recent production of a DVD titled, *'Martham Stories'*; a series of short films about Martham's history, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and produced by Media Projects East with the support of the Martham History Group and Flegg High School[18]. Described as aiming "to collect reminiscences on a wide range of topics including school life, the railway, village carnivals and the impact of the war years" (Media Projects East, 2013), the project featured local historians speaking about their knowledge of the village's history and older residents telling stories about village life within their living memory. The films were compiled into a DVD, which was 'premiered' at the local high school in May 2013 (four months before my visit to Martham).

[17] 391 members on 28th November 2014.
[18] The films are available to view at http://www.mediaprojectseast.co.uk/martham/index.html.

Judging by the responses of interviewees, the DVD was a popular and well-received project. People particularly commented on their enjoyment of learning about life during the war, childhood pranks, and general village life in the past. There was also a sense that the project had engendered a sense of community by involving local schoolchildren and longstanding residents and that it had produced something of value to the community, both now and in the future. The 'stories' that were told included 'A Farming Family', 'Carnivals', 'Fire and Flood', 'The Village Butcher' and 'Village Shops'. They thus highlighted positive aspects of Martham's identity (and were undoubtedly chosen for this reason) by emphasising rural practices (e.g. farming), traditional events (e.g. carnivals), community spirit in times of crisis (e.g. during severe flooding in 1938), and 'village' features (e.g. the butcher's and other shops), throughout recent history. The *'Martham Stories'* project, therefore, emphasises and reproduces aspects of Martham's identity and celebrates its heritage through the telling and recording of social memories.

7.5.2 'Knowing' Martham through local history

As well as reiterating the 'community' (and thus rural) aspect of Martham's identity, such heritage-related practices emerged as a mechanism through which inhabitants establish, deepen and perform their 'knowing', and sense of belonging in, the village. For some lifelong residents, history group meetings and the 'Memories of Martham' Facebook page offer forums where they can share and accumulate their knowledge of the village's past. For some, the accuracy of this history is regarded as vitally important, and this concern can cause tensions and provoke resentment against newer residents, who tell alternative versions but are deemed to lack the relevant knowledge and experience. One example of this was an anecdote relayed to me by Duncan:

> *"Well you get, the history group, people come there what aren't really Martham people but they're making out they know all the stuff on Martham. I went in the butcher's a few weeks ago and there was a woman come in and she was running on and she was saying, 'oh yes I've been doing all the research on Martham ponds and there's only ever been four ponds'. I said,'*

> *whatever are you on about?' I said 'you're a non-local squit'. I said, 'I can name seven now'. 'You cannot'. I said 'you want a bet love?'...And that annoys me, you know, they make out they know everything but they don't"* (Duncan, Martham).

Knowledge of Martham's past was used in Duncan's account both to reiterate his own status as someone who 'knows', and therefore belongs in, the village and to de-legitimise the position of someone he saw as an outsider. Local history practices are thus not always inclusive and harmonious, since, as Duncan's reference to *"a non-local squit*" denotes, they can highlight dividing lines between social groups. Multiple and competing versions of the past can also be used for furthering particular groups' or individuals' interests and political agendas, forming a source of conflict as well as cohesion (Crouch & Parker, 2003; Hoelscher, 2007; Massey, 1995; Said, 2000).

In contrast to people such as Duncan, Mark, Gareth and Justin, who used their longstanding connection to the place to explain their interest in local history, one returnee, Adam, who was raised in the area used his connection to explain his *lack* of interest:

> RW: *"Do you take much of an interest in the history of the area?"*
>
> Adam: *"I don't, because I've always been here. I think more people who've come into the village are more interested."*
>
> RW: *"Why do you think that is?"*
>
> Adam: "*Well I know the place. I can trace it right back to, phrr, 1941 when I was fourteen."*

Adam interpreted local history practices as a way of establishing a knowledge of, and thus connection with, the area. Since Adam already 'knows the place', he does not feel a need to expand on this knowledge further by participating in such practices. His observation that people who have moved into the village are more interested, whilst certainly not universally true, was reflected in the membership composition of the local history group and supported by the accounts of two newer residents:

> *"I think when people come here they should find out the history of the place. I tried to find out, I'm interested"* (Bruce, Martham).

> *"Um, I don't know [what it is that makes people interested in local history]. I don't think it's because necessarily they've been here a long time. I think if you were to look at people who are part of the historical society, quite a few of them are newcomers, and I think they come with that energy and interest that they're investing in the new place they live. And I suppose that would be my view...I like the stories"* (Anita, Martham).

Being aware of the village's history is thus seen by both newcomers and lifelong residents as a means (albeit variably interpreted and implemented) of establishing and maintaining a personal connection with the place. The circulation of photographs, stories and historical materials within the community provides people with a sense of inclusion and belonging, thereby incorporating them into the 'story' of Martham. This supports Lewicka's (2008) findings of a correlation between 'active' place attachment and an interest in local history. In a later paper, Lewicka (2013) explains this correlation with reference to Seamon's (1980) notion of place-ballets (see 2.3) and different types of memory. She argues that people with a lifelong or genealogical connection to a place acquire place-related procedural memories through 'living' a place and through their participation in place-ballets, which act to anchor them in the place's past and reiterate their sense of belonging. However, since this type of procedural memory requires time to develop, newer residents rely more on an active interest in place (or family) history – a form of declarative memory – to engage with the place's past and establish a personal connection with it. Thus, "active interest in the history of a place (e.g. one's city or street) is a means through which a newcomer may feel a part of the place's history and thus develop emotional bonds with the (new) place" (Lewicka, 2013, p.54).

7.5.3 Local history and attitudes to change

Heritage-related practices can serve to reiterate dominant identities of a place and its people by circulating particular narratives and images. They can also offer a means of

sustaining these identities (or parts thereof) through times of change. However, from another perspective, a strong emphasis on local history is problematic because it promotes an unhealthy resistance to change. As Massey explains, attempts to construct a place's identity according to its past can lead to an essentialisation of place, whereby "'the past' is seen in some sense to embody the real character of the place" and "a particular relationship between the assumed identity of a place and its history" is presupposed (Massey, 1995, p.183). This essentialisation can contribute to a sense of timelessness, and to a resistance to change, as people seek to conserve the place's character through preserving and reproducing its historical features (see 3.3.1 and 6.3). This tendency means that local history groups are often associated with staidness. As one Askam resident put it:

> *"I think one of the reasons why I've always steered away from local history groups is because I've always connected it with people feeling a sense of loss for what was…but places shouldn't remain static"* (Roz, Askam).

There were certainly instances in Martham (and Mullion and Askam) of people expressing a sense of loss over shops and buildings that had changed and of a desire to protect the village against modern features that are not seen as 'fitting in' with its character (see Box 7.3). Like Roz, some Martham residents also expressed concerns about history group activities. Mike, for instance, talked about his concern that attempts to record and remember Martham's past must be balanced with providing for current needs:

> *"Housing wise, housing is required. But there was a bit of an uproar [about one development] and again, opposite this estate they've developed a piece the other side and there was an old house there and the history group were fighting to try and save it. And to be honest, building wise, the house was nothing. It didn't look anything. So it was all well and good but, yeah" (Mike, Martham).*

The wider literature suggests that local history societies and similar groups are indeed often involved in, initiate, or lead protests against developments in rural areas. This can be a highly political process through which elite groups work to further their own

agendas (such as protecting their fiscal and emotional investment in a 'rural idyll' (Woods, 2005b)) by blocking developments on the pretext of heritage or nature conservation (Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994). 'Local history' can thus be deployed as a political weapon by powerful groups to legitimate resistance and obscure more selfish reasons for protest. This research did not find evidence of this but, since no major developments were being proposed at the time of fieldwork, the presence of such political motives within the case studies' history groups cannot be precluded and are important to acknowledge.

Box 7.3: Heritage and sense of place: A walk with Mary

Plate 7.4: Flower-boxes on Martham Green

Mary, now retired, moved to Martham forty-seven years ago. She is an active member of the History Group and is passionate about researching and recording all aspects of Martham's history. I spent one morning walking with Mary around Martham as she imparted some of her knowledge about the history of various buildings, including old cottages, farms, places of worship, and former shops and businesses.

As we walk around the village green, Mary points out some cottages that *"have been there for centuries"* and emphasises the importance of the green as common ground around which Martham was originally built. As a visible, tangible feature of village heritage, Mary is particularly protective about retaining its 'original' aesthetic character:

> *"You see, people coming into the village have different ideas about things and have gradually changed it. They've put a lot of effort into tidying it up and wanted to put more colour into it – though I think green is such a soothing colour it doesn't need it. So they've planted various trees and put in these huge wooden boxes for flowers. I mean these [flower boxes] are so suburban it's untrue. They're out of keeping with what the common should about. I mean the commons wouldn't have had any of that."*

She picks up on this theme a little later, as we make our way around to the other side of the green:

> *"You see now this tree here, this is a cherry tree. Well this is one of the things that they first put on the green, which really wasn't at all suitable because, well, cherries aren't really the right, well they wouldn't have been on the green would they?"*

Mary's objection to modern features that she perceives as 'out of keeping' with the green, and her description of the flower boxes as 'suburban', indicate that, for her,

conserving the character of the green is part of maintaining Martham's identity – both in terms of its historical roots and its 'rural-ness'. Rurality is, therefore, equated, in part, with the idea of an aesthetically 'traditional' village. However, her account also reveals the contested nature of place, as clearly there are other groups who disagree with her vision of what the green should look like. Mary's characterisation of these people as those who have 'come into the village' with 'different ideas about things' implies a perception of these people as 'different', less 'rural', and less knowledgeable about Martham's 'authentic' identity than herself. Thus, whilst some residents may perceive Mary as an in-migrant, her long-term association with the place, and engagement with its past, has served to establish her own sense of belonging.

Although Mary is keen to conserve certain aspects of Martham's past, this does not mean that she is resistant to any change, particularly if she perceives that change to support community life (for instance, she is especially supportive of the recent construction of a new secondary school). She is also pragmatic about 'modern' additions to the landscape and does not necessarily dislike them. This emerges during one of our conversations about windfarms:

> *"I quite like them. I think these ones* (points to the local turbines) *are quite artistic. I don't like the ones with just two blades though, they're just ugly. But generally I don't mind modern equipment in the landscape at all, so long as they are well-designed. Even electricity pylons."*

Although aesthetic appeal is clearly a consideration for Mary, her perception of this is not necessarily predicated on historical merit. Thus, whilst in some ways Mary's passion for local history leads to an essentialisation of Martham and a desire to fix this through the heritage conservation (Mary also told me about buildings which she had tried to get listed in order to prevent their demolition), her account reveals the complexity and context-dependency of responses to physical change. For Mary, it is the retention of physical heritage that is important in maintaining the place's identity, so it is changes she perceives as threatening this that she is most likely to resist.

As might be expected, members of Martham History Group are keen to conserve old buildings and preserve the traditional character of the village. However, Mary's account shows that associations between local history interests and responses to change are more complex than they appear. There are likely to be some local history group members who do indeed seek to resist change and preserve place in a state of changelessness, but engaging with local history does not always, or necessarily, require such 'clinging on to' the past. Mark, who (as we have seen) places great value on local history, recognises the potential for an emphasis on heritage to result in a sense of static-ness but also spoke about his openness to change:

> *"[One person I know] has tried quite hard to stop things from being changed. You know, she has been [objecting to things], which is, I know why she did because she likes to see things in a, you need to keep your heritage. And I agree with that. But you need to change as well, you can't*

> *live in the past. You can't. So I don't mind it changing, because it has to"* (Mark, Martham).

Local history is, therefore, not always about attempting to reproduce the past. The feeling that emerged more strongly from the interviews was one of wishing to record and remember the past so that it is not forgotten and so that current and future residents may better understand the origins and evolution of the village. There is an emotional attachment for many people to the social memories contained in residents' oral histories and historical materials, and the recording of these is seen as a way of ensuring their continued survival:

> *"I've always been interested in the village life, yeah. And that's why, as I say, for fifteen, twenty years I've collected all old stuff on the village. I must have over eight hundred photographs, I've got books, and old mementoes…I just think that if people don't keep collecting stuff like that then it's all going to be forgotten - what went on, years ago. Because a lot of people have all these lovely old pictures, old photographs, don't they? And when they die they just throw them away"* (Duncan, Martham).

> *"Oh yeah, I do [have fond memories of the place]. That's a job to think of them. My daughter always says you should sit down and write a book about it, write it down"* (Ray, Martham).

> *"The idea of course [of the DVD] was to not let this information, thoughts and everything, of the older generation disappear with them. Get it down. That was the main objective I think"* (Greg, Martham).

So whilst producing materials about local history is partly about representing images of the past and (re)constructing particular versions of the place's identity, it is also about fulfilling emotive desires to establish and perpetuate personal connections with that place. Performing local history and heritage can thus be seen as a relational process; it connects to a variety of the individual's embodied experiences and value-systems, as well as to social memories, social practices, and wider discourses and representations. It also does not *necessarily* involve preserving the past but can allow room for places to be recognised as interconnected to wider places and processes, and for change and flux to be welcomed as inevitable in the ongoing becoming of place. As Mackenzie (2004; 2006) has argued in reference to crofting communities in Scotland, identity and

belonging may be enacted through historical references and the continuation of traditional practices, but this is not a rigid or essentialist process. Rather, practices emerge as contingent and dynamic, shaping and re-shaping individual and collective articulations of rural community and belonging according to contemporary contexts and actions.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the importance of social memories and social practices in performing personal connections with, and discursive ideas about, a specifically rural version of 'community'. I have argued that these play a significant role in shaping ideas about rural identity and in constructing and reiterating a sense of belonging for rural residents. The social memories that circulate, and the social practices that are performed, within the villages thus emerge as important markers of this 'community' aspect of place identity. In line with Liepins' (2000a; 2000b) conceptual framework (see 2.2.3), the idea of 'community' in the case study villages can be seen to be made up of people (and the social relations between them); shared meanings about rural place and identity; practices that enact and reproduce these meanings; and spaces and structures that provide a material form in which 'community' is constructed and practiced (such as heritage centres).

The chapter has also highlighted how practices such as the activities of local history groups, online forums and the perpetuation of 'traditional' events work to reiterate rural identities and maintain a continuity with the place's past (and perhaps also future). This process is not about attempting to freeze a place in time. Rather, it is about telling a place's story and using that narrative to create an element of continuity and stability around the features of place that are valued most highly (though political motivations may also exist). Whilst maintaining or strengthening social relations is key to this

process, efforts to conserve particular material features also play a role, particularly if these features serve as symbolic reminders of earlier stages in the 'story' of people and place. Importantly, the research findings show that, whilst there is often a sense of loss in relation to change, there is also recognition that places need to change in order to 'live'. For some individuals who acknowledge this relational, processual nature of place, local history practices and village traditions can have a positive impact on facilitating an accommodation of change by providing an element of 'community' continuity and stability, whilst still allowing the place to evolve.

Exploring the implications of these social aspects of place attachment for understanding responses to change has revealed that 'a sense of community' is a key asset that is highly valued, and therefore strongly defended, by rural residents. In general, interviewees across all three case studies placed much emphasis on processes and implications of social change, which they perceived to be having discernible impacts (both positive and negative) on the character of the village and lives of its inhabitants. Whilst these discussions were accompanied by debates around planning and development within the villages, general conversations about 'change' did not typically extend to the windfarm or other changes to the surrounding landscape. People's sphere of concern in this respect was usually confined to within the village boundaries, where material changes were partly evaluated according to perceptions of whether they positively or negatively impacted the sociality of the place. Changes to the social relations and dynamics within the community, and material change within the village boundaries (such as housing developments), thus appear to be more at the forefront of people's minds than changes to the peripheral landscape.

To some extent, this observation reflects findings from the environment and behaviour literature which suggest that, over time, social relations become more important determinants of place attachment than the physical environment (Hummon, 1992; Smaldone, 2006, see also 2.3). However, such a view overlooks the importance of

engagements with the surrounding landscape that, as explored in Chapter Six, play a significant role in shaping attachments to rural place. The emphasis on social change may instead be partly explained by the argument that, “while the multiplicity of local social identity is often stressed (Bird et al., 1993), environment is more commonly seen as a realm of continuity, a geographical 'base' on which cultures play” (Crouch and Matless 1996 p252). Rural landscapes are thus often perceived as stable entities persisting relatively unchanged throughout time (Crouch & Matless, 1996; Massey, 2006; Pasqualetti, 2000; Short, 1991; Woods, 2011). Strong attachment to a place may enhance such notions, as the stability and continuity provided by prolonged attachment leads to a “feeling that this place has endured and will persist as a distinctive entity even though the world around may change” (Relph, 1976, p.31). In circumstances where there is no imminent threat of change to the surrounding rural landscape (as in this research, where no significant planning proposals existed at the time of fieldwork), it is thus easy for the qualities of the surrounding countryside to be taken for granted as part of ‘natural attitudes’ towards the backdrop of the everyday lifeworld (Seamon, 1980). This should not be mistaken for these qualities being less highly valued than social aspects of place, as potential landscape changes are often resisted, particularly if they are perceived as antithetical to the landscape’s character and rural identity. The value of different aspects of rural place (i.e. social and material) are likely to emerge most strongly when their essential or supporting features are perceived to be under threat of change.

Having established the role of personal experiences and rural representations in place attachment and identity processes in Chapter Six, Chapter Seven has illustrated how social memories and practices relating to ‘community’ are also integral to these, partly due to the close association between community and rurality in popular discourse. It has also demonstrated that attitudes towards change are not straightforward, but involve complex evaluations of its impact on the social and material aspects of place and level of threat/benefit to the continuity of place and community. Chapter Eight now

shifts the emphasis to material change by exploring rural residents' perceptions of non-'natural' structures in rural landscapes.

Chapter 8. ‘Nature’, heritage and temporality in rural landscapes: Understanding attitudes towards non-‘natural’ structures

> *"If you think back to what the railways looked like to the 19th century mind, or indeed the 18th century when the canals were coming through, I think we have to have our minds open to how the wind turbine will appear to us in 100 years”*
>
> - Helen Ghosh, Director of the National Trust (quoted in Hattersley, 2013)

8.1 Introduction

So far, this thesis has highlighted how concepts of temporality and perceptions of the past are enrolled in the ways in which rural residents conceptualise and relate to the place in which they live. We have also seen how perceptions of community change are of great concern to residents but can be variously thought of as positive or negative, depending on personal and relational factors, such as emotive memories of the past; ideas around the temporal nature of rural place (i.e. as ‘timeless’ or constantly in ‘becoming’); and pragmatic considerations, such as implications for social and economic prosperity. Social memories and practices around local history and community tradition have emerged as ways of not just ‘preserving’ a static image of the past, but of maintaining a sense of continuity with the ‘roots’ and character of a place (and thus perpetuating features of rural identity), whilst also accommodating change.

This chapter considers the ‘understandings of (post)nature’ element of rural place experience (Fig. 3.1) and addresses the question of how discursive ideas about rural place, ‘nature’ and temporality are enrolled in perceptions of non-‘natural’ structures and temporality in rural landscapes (research question 2). It does so through exploring opinions about three examples of notable non-‘natural’ structures from the case studies: Mullion Harbour; remnants from the mining industry in Askam; and the

satellites of Goonhilly Earth Station in Mullion. Although a detailed discussion of attitudes towards the windfarms (research question 3) is primarily left for Chapter Nine, some references to them are included here because other non-'natural' structures were often discussed in relation to them and/or as a result of my questioning on this topic. The discussions reveal perceptions of non-'natural' structures to be multifarious and, in part, related to conceptualisations of place-temporality, interpretations of 'nature', and valuations of heritage.

8.2 Mullion Harbour

8.2.1 Heritage, 'naturalness' and the essentialisation of place

Notions of what is deemed 'natural' (and therefore rural) are flexible and adaptable. As Williams (1976, p.223) argues, 'nature' is generally considered to be "what man [sic] has not made, though if he made it long enough ago – a hedgerow or a desert – it will usually be included as *natural*". In other words, once a human-induced change or structure has been around long enough, it appears to pass from the realm of culture into that of nature. Over time, therefore, structures commonly thought of as industrial or cultural can be conceptually re-assigned as being in some way 'natural'.

I suggest that there are two distinct ways in which this process occurs, which are related to the two primary meanings of the word 'nature' as referring to i) the non-human world; and ii) the character or essence of something. Firstly, as shall be discussed in 8.3 with reference to Askam's mining landscape, the ecological colonisation of human-made structures (the 're-claiming' of objects and spaces by 'nature') and their conceptual assimilation into the topography of the landscape over time can act to blur the nature-culture binary to the point that they are perceived as synonymous with the 'natural' landscape (Knight & Harrison, 2013). Secondly, as the focus on Mullion Harbour here will demonstrate, the assignation of some structures as

symbols of cultural heritage can lead to them being so strongly associated with the place's sense of shared identity that they come to be perceived as essential and timeless features of a museumised landscape (Massey, 1995). However, as the examples discussed in this chapter reveal, attitudes towards non-'natural' structures and their place within the landscape are heterogeneous and enrol perceptions of 'nature' in various ways.

In the case of Mullion Harbour, which is currently maintained by the National Trust, an explicit 're-claiming' by 'nature' (the non-human) has not yet occurred. Yet there remains a sense that it somehow 'fits in with' the 'natural' coastline of the Lizard peninsula. Time has led to the harbour being so closely associated with the history and identity of Mullion (and popular ideas of Cornish fishing villages more widely) that it has come to symbolise the nature (character) of the place. It thus plays a role in essentialising Mullion as an archetypal, picturesque Cornish (former-)fishing village – or, in other words, as a bounded and naturalised space, rather than as constituted by social relations (c.f. Massey, 1995). As this section explores, this has, in part, contributed to some residents fiercely protecting the harbour from the threat of future change. However, as has been asserted throughout this thesis, these discourses are multiple and interpretations are influenced both by rational assessments of utility and personal experiences; hence, alternative perspectives about the harbour, its temporality, and its place within the 'natural' surroundings also exist.

A browse of tourist literature on Mullion will unerringly result in a plethora of images of Mullion Harbour; depicted on postcards and websites related to Mullion, the wider Lizard peninsula, or even Cornwall. Despite being a relatively recent harbour compared to others in the county (it was built in the 1890s), these images conjure up a traditional Cornish fishing village and picturesque coastline that are distinguishing elements of Cornwall's cultural landscape. The prevalence of these representations of Mullion Harbour is indicative of the high cultural value placed upon it and its symbolic role in

representing the character or identity of the area. This was also reflected in the narratives of some interviewees, who portrayed the harbour as a valuable cultural asset:

> *"It is a unique iconic landscape with a wonderful and longstanding history. And it is still a working harbour…And it is iconic, people say it is iconic. Some people spend hours sat down there just looking"* (Alan, Mullion).

> *"The jewel in Mullion's crown is its harbour"* (Barbara, Mullion).

Plate 8.1: Mullion Harbour

Plate 8.2: Mullion Cove from the west pier of the harbour

The notion of the harbour as a defining feature of Mullion is a time-dependent process, as its 'iconic-ness' arises principally from its age and historical associations. Its economic and cultural value, originally based on its importance to fishing and trade, is now largely based on its aesthetic and historical qualities as an object for tourist consumption (I was told that only two boats now fish out of the harbour as a means of livelihood). Its aesthetic value is interesting, as it is questionable whether such an imposing structure would be considered beautiful if it were built today. Rather, its beauty appears to be linked to its age, cultural value and perceived assimilation into the natural surroundings. Thus, whilst the harbour is not thought of as naturally occurring, it can be argued to have been conceptually naturalised - and also imbued with a sense of timelessness - by symbolising the essence of place in dominant representations of Mullion's identity. As DeSilvey (2012, p.34) suggests in her exploration of different ways to frame transience at Mullion Harbour, "our 'common-

sensing' of the harbour tells us that it's a stable feature in a more-or-less durable landscape" – which has important implications for the way in which changes to it are conceptualised.

There is currently uncertainty about the future of Mullion Harbour. Its battering by coastal storms and vulnerability to future sea level rise and climate change has led its owners, the National Trust, to decide on a policy of managed retreat in recognition that its maintenance is unsustainable in the long-term. Thus, "the harbour will be maintained in the immediate future but when major damage is sustained, the Trust will make safe but not repair" (National Trust, 2008, p.13). This decision will ultimately lead to the collapse and removal of the harbour 'piers' (as the arms of the harbour are known) and has led to extensive controversy within the local community; which is unsurprising given the harbour's importance as a particularly treasured and place-defining part of the landscape.

Plate 8.3: Mullion Harbour in rough seas

Plate 8.4: The south pier of Mullion Harbour showing damage from a recent storm

The concept of the harbour's naturalised timelessness - derived from its cultural and heritage value – is implicated in the feelings of people who contest the managed retreat policy. This argument has been made by DeSilvey (2012, p.35), who explains it as follows:

> "The paired framing of Mullion as both 'timeless' and 'picturesque' can work to block reflection on its uncertain future. The labelling of a place as 'timeless' foregrounds qualities of continuity and stability, and forecloses speculation about the past by implying that it now appears 'as it was and

> ever shall be' – a synchronic projection of persistence. The association with the 'picturesque' achieves a similar embalming effect, fixing the landscape as an object for consumption, usually by outsiders".

Such framings account, in part, for the feelings of some of my interviewees, who considered the harbour to be an integral part of Mullion as a place. These people argued that the harbour is such an important heritage asset that it should be given the same priority as more famous historical features and maintained regardless of cost. Barbara, for example, drew a parallel between Mullion Harbour and another National Trust property to explain her view of the organisation (which she considers as having a duty to protect heritage for the nation) as, in this instance, somewhat irresponsible:

> *"But they've thrown money at various things. I mean Castle Drogo*[19]*, they'll be throwing money at that forever because of the construction of it. And yet they're prepared to let the Meyer family, who still own two properties down in the cove - their father owned the harbour and gifted it to the National Trust - so they've, you know, how can you let something that's been given, go. I'm very disappointed with the National Trust over that"* (Barbara, Mullion).

Bill, a lifelong resident of Mullion, also compared the harbour to other 'heritage', using iconic national buildings as examples:

> *"Well, I'd say to me it's just as important as Big Ben or the Houses of Parliament, and they wouldn't let them fall down. Now pull down the Houses of Parliament, that's a better idea* (laughs). *But Mullion Harbour has got just as much heritage, and it means something"* (Bill, Mullion).

Bill's sense of loss at the prospect of the harbour's deterioration is partly related to his personal experiences of, and his family's historical relationship with, it. Since he and his family have fished from Mullion Harbour for generations, it has played a significant role in his everyday life and economic well-being, forming a basis for his social relations, personal memories and place attachment. From his perspective, the prioritisation of some historical features over others is politically influenced and does not necessarily reflect their 'heritage' value. This reveals perceptions of 'heritage' as

[19] Castle Drogo is a National Trust Property on Dartmoor National Park in Devon, which requires significant maintenance due to water ingress, partly as a result of the high rainfall Dartmoor receives.

not just related to wider cultural discourses and valuations, but also as both politically embedded and relational to individual life histories and perspectives. For Bill, the continued maintenance of the harbour is vital because its loss would fundamentally alter the 'spirit' of the place. Other residents may find change to Mullion Cove easier to accommodate if it forms a less significant part of their everyday life and attachment to place (as Lynnette's account in 6.3 showed). As Harvey (2013, p.158) explains, the importance placed on "the (personal) heritage of certain landscapes is both inescapable and powerful", and personal connections can "outweigh any sense of objective heritage value".

The interviews also revealed a perception that the National Trust has a responsibility, as the owner of the harbour, to maintain it in order to protect the houses around the cove from the sea and to support the tourist industry. Both Jill, a lifelong resident of Mullion Cove, and Nicola, a resident of Mullion for just 18 months, portrayed such views:

> *"From my point of view, I think if the harbour wall went it would be hideous. It would be a real shame. Because I don't think we'd get so many people coming down here. There's a lot of history in those walls. I just think it would be horrible. We'd all end up with, we'd go to rack and ruin, it would all look awful, because no one would come and clear away the rocks, would they. Well, the sea would. I don't know whether people would still come down and visit, because they like to sit and fish off the harbour wall and the local kids come and jump off it"* (Jill, Mullion).

> *"I think it would be very wrong for them to own something, as they do, and not maintain it. Because there are people down there with properties who didn't ask the National Trust to buy the harbour and if the harbour's not looked after then their properties will obviously end up being breached eventually. Not that I really understand these things, but if I lived there I'd be very upset if the harbour wasn't maintained…Mullion Harbour is beautiful, and I know things like that cost a lot but I think if you, you know, if you source your work properly you should be able to afford to do that I would've thought"* (Nicola, Mullion).

The politics of designating and conserving particular structures or landscapes as 'heritage' (and the economic implications for the tourist industry) are highlighted by these accounts. The National Trust is perceived as being trusted with the heritage of

the nation and therefore, as having a responsibility to maintain the harbour. Yet clearly there is not always consensus about which heritage features should be prioritised given limited resources. Thus, whilst giving the appearance of a harmonious celebration of a shared history, 'heritage' is a situated, contested and arguably elitist (Hale, 2001; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004) political concept (Harvey, 2001).

Recognition of the situated and relational nature of heritage perceptions and valuations adds a subtle, but important, layer to arguments that resistance to change and place-protective action is linked to place attachment (Brown & Perkins, 1992; Devine-Wright, 2009; Haggett, 2011; Reed, 2008; Stedman, 2002) because it highlights that whether or not a change is perceived as a threat to place depends on the extent to which it alters or affects particular features that are seen as place-defining (which will vary between individuals).

8.2.2 Highlighting place evolution and relationality

As we have seen, several participants were critical of the National Trust's policy and passionate about the harbour's continued preservation. However, a diversity of opinions existed about the issue and other residents were more sympathetic to the National Trust's position. Whilst still valuing the harbour, their narratives portrayed a consideration of the issue that recognised practical and economic challenges:

> *"We went to a meeting with the National Trust; they ran an open day to explain to people that they'd reached the stage where they could no longer afford to undertake the rebuilding of the harbour should a major storm damage the wall, because there had been a few incidents like this. And it's all down to sea level rise. I hadn't appreciated that the sea level here in Mullion is rising by about 5 millimetres a year!...So, I think we're just accepting, we've got the old, old problem that although the National Trust owns it there is no income-producing activity down there that would bring in the cash flow to pay for its repair"* (James, Mullion).

> *"Um, I don't know what my, I can completely see where the National Trust are coming from. They don't make any money from it as such. If you live down there it's a bit of a nightmare but I haven't got any sort of, I don't think it's terrible that they're pulling out or anything like that. It gets a hell of a*

> *beating every winter. I mean the waves come up right over the top. But no I can see why they're pulling out, I don't think it's disastrous. There's not much, I mean fishing wise and stuff, not much goes out of there"* (Kimberley, Mullion).

> *"I think it certainly would be sad in a lot of ways to see it go but then you can see the other side of it. The power of the sea down there is phenomenal, and the cost of trying, the upkeep to it, it's a very fine line as to whether they find the money"* (Caroline, Mullion).

Of particular pertinence to the discussion about 'nature', heritage and temporality is the way in which many who were more supportive of the managed retreat policy did not see the harbour as part of the original, 'natural' coastline and were more open to viewing it as just a small part of the area's much longer history:

> *"So really it's just going to have to be allowed to deteriorate. It will, in time, revert to what it was before it became a harbour. It will become Mullion bay again, with a sandy beach"* (James, Mullion).

> *"And yeah, I mean there are pictures of what it was like before all that and it's still nice and everything. I don't think it's going to ruin it from that point of view"* (Kimberley, Mullion).

These interviewees appear to find it easier to accept a vision of Mullion cove without the harbour. Such viewpoints were facilitated, in some instances, by the National Trust's approach to framing coastal change, which is encapsulated in *Shifting Shores: Living with a changing coastline* (National Trust, 2008). This document outlines how the National Trust plans to respond to coastal erosion in the context of climate change, emphasising the continuously changing nature of the coastline and their intention to work with communities to identify appropriate management responses that protect "social, cultural, historic, economic and environmental assets" (National Trust, 2008, p.8)[20]. The National Trust's communication on coastal erosion at Mullion Harbour included stakeholder engagement meetings between 2004 and 2006 and the display of a nineteenth-century photograph of the cove taken before the harbour was built – which Kimberley (and other residents) specifically referred to (see Plate 8.1). The use

[20] See Geoghegan and Leyshon (2012) for an interesting discussion regarding the narrative and discursive strategies employed in this document.

of the image serves to highlight the temporary nature of the harbour as a human-made alteration to the landscape. It could thus be described as a successful attempt to "give *time* back to a timeless landscape" (DeSilvey, 2012, p.35, original emphasis) - something DeSilvey seeks to achieve by using narrative and alternative framings of Mullion Harbour's past in creating an 'anticipatory history' (see 3.3.2).

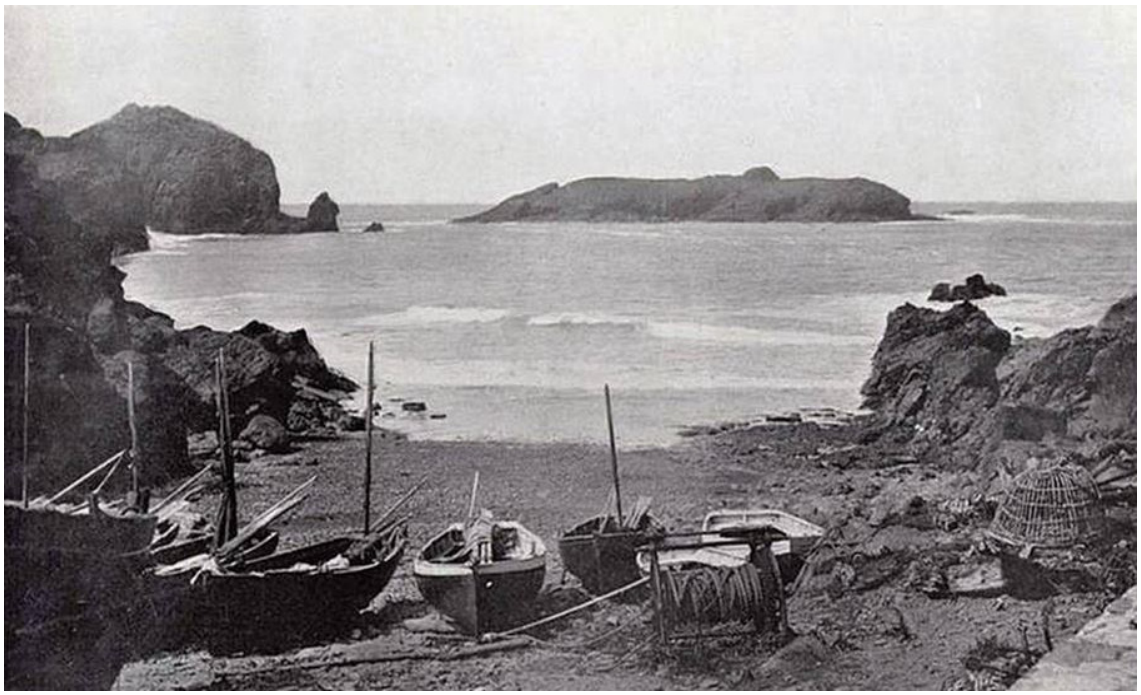


Plate 8.5: Mullion Cove sometime in the nineteenth century, before the harbour was built

Whilst this framing of the harbour's history has been effective at influencing the reactions of some people, opponents to the managed retreat policy contest the use of this picture. One resident, Alan, who is particularly passionate about conserving the harbour, is sceptical about the National Trust's use of such materials and perceives it as a politically-driven manipulation of the issue that glosses over important details:

> *"[The photos] show it on a flat calm water, and everyone is supposed to go 'aw, isn't that pretty'. Me, I take one look at that, and I'm a bit cynical"* (Alan, Mullion).

He went on to explain how before the harbour was built there were natural rocks in the cove that acted as a protective reef for the houses around it. Since those cannot be replaced, allowing the harbour to disappear would not be putting to the cove back to its

original natural condition, as the National Trust claim. Perceptions about the role and value of the harbour, and opinions regarding its future, thus continue to be contested.

8.3 Askam's mining landscape

8.3.1 A 'natural' mining landscape?

Askam's mining landscape could also be described as having become essentialised due to its centrality in constructions of place identity. As discussed in 4.3.2, the iron-ore mining industry was central to the establishment of Askam in the nineteenth century but came to an end in the 1930s. The area around Askam is littered with vestiges of the mining, such as spoil heaps, slag banks, waterholes (containing water pumped from the mines) and the ruins of engine-beds. Perhaps the most striking of these is an eight-hundred-metre long, fifty-metre wide (approx.) slag bank that stretches out into the Duddon estuary from Askam, which is known as 'Askam Pier' (see Plates 8.6 and 8.7).

Plate 8.6: View of the 'pier' from Askam

Plate 8.7: View from the hill above Ireleth. Askam Pier is in the centre of the picture

Whilst the industrial origins of such remnants might be expected to clash with conceptualisations of Askam as a rural place, this was not found to be the case. The widespread acceptance of Askam's mining remnants as part of the landscape is partly related to their role within social memories of Askam's past. As I explore in detail in Wheeler (2014) (see Appendix A), the mining vestiges within the landscape serve to perpetuate the presence of the industry by prompting an array of personal and social

memories for residents. Askam Pier, for example, was pointed out, and its origins explained, by most of the walking-interviewees. For instance:

> *"This long thing here is laughingly called Askam Pier. And when the ironworks, which was where those houses are, when they were getting the pig iron out and then there'd be all the rubbish and slag, and they were gradually tipping it down, and it went right out into the sea"* (Jane, resident of 43 years).

> *"So it must've been absolutely cracking to actually hear the place while they were tipping molten rock into water. You know, when the tide was up"* (Simon, resident of 21 years).

The pier's visibility and prominence within the landscape has the ability to conjure up images of the industry at work, acting as a constant reminder of the village's origins, which (as discussed in 7.3.1) form an integral part of place identity for many residents. The mining remains are thus an important source of social memory and serve to maintain a connection with the past.

However, as Mick's account in Box 8.1 demonstrates, the mining remnants have also come to be seen as fitting in with the 'natural' features of the place due to being un-conserved and ecologically colonised. For instance, mussels have made their home on the edges of the pier, rabbits have burrowed into the slag banks along the shoreline, and most vestiges have been 'grown over' by grass and other plants.

Box 8.1: Mining remnants as 'natural', windfarms as incongruent: A walk with Mick

Mick is a forty-seven-year-old Askam resident who moved from a large urban area twenty-one years ago. As we walk along the estuary shoreline, Mick talks about how Askam Pier has been 'taken back by nature' by being colonised by mussels and eroded by the water:

> *"But now, again, [the pier's] taken on a life of its own. In certain months you'll see people down there picking mussels. And you can't get fresher than that can you? You just walk down there, fill a bucket full of mussels and away you go… I mean this [the pier] is manmade but at the water's edge nature's taken it back. And eventually nature will take it all back because it will erode."*

A little later, we approach some spoil heaps – prominent mounds of stone and sand that were excavated when the iron-ore mines were dug. These have a deep red-

brown colour to them that denote their association with the iron industry and, when I comment on this, Mick talks about how, although the mining industry has made a big impact on the landscape, he sees little distinction between the mining remnants and the surrounding countryside:

Plate 8.8: Mining remnants: A waterhole and spoil heap with Askam behind

> RW: *"You can really see the red from the iron can't you."*
>
> Mick: *"Oh yeah, yeah. Like I said, there and there* (points to slag banks and spoil heaps) *you've got prime examples of industry impacting, but it hasn't impacted. Do you know what I mean? I don't think it has. Yes, it's there, but it looks as though it should be there. Or is that just me being a bit* (sentence unfinished)*."*

Mick's overt accommodation of industrial elements within what he values as a rural landscape is particularly illuminating given that he is firmly against Far Old Park Windfarm (and other windfarms). When I ask about the reasons for these differing opinions he at first finds it difficult to articulate (indicating the somewhat un-reflexive nature of his place-conceptualisations), but then attributes it to differences in his perception of both their purposefulness and aesthetic form:

> RW: *"So what would you say the difference is between those kind of things and the windfarms?"*
>
> Mick: "*Erm, these provide, well, these provide a purpose I think. I think that [the pier] acts as a natural break, so it protects that side of the beach. But having said that, if that hadn't been there maybe that grass [on the estuary beach] wouldn't have got a hold. But windfarms* (sighs), *I don't know."*
>
> RW: *"So it's the kind of non-use of it?"*
>
> Mick: "*Yeah. You look at that [spoil heap], that doesn't look out of place. If you look at that, it's red but it's - it looks like it's meant to belong in Australia - but it looks kind of natural, with the landscape. Whereas they* (the wind turbines) *stand out more. You know, you look up there and it's on your eye line straight away."*

Mick's sense that the mining remnants 'look as if they should be there' is partly related to how they have, over time, become colonised by plants and animals and are thus perceived as 'blending in' with their 'natural' surroundings. Hence, although Mick is well aware of the industrial aspect of the landscape's shape, he perceives the mining features to have little impact over its 'natural' character in the present day. Rather, their familiarity and integration with 'nature' have led to them becoming thoroughly subsumed into his conceptualisation of Askam as a place. The windfarm is both more difficult for Mick to visually reconcile with the 'natural' landscape than the mining vestiges and more difficult to accept on a rational basis due to his perception of it as inefficient (and therefore 'useless') and the pier (for example) as providing some sort of purpose even in its present-day, abandoned form. As Peter's account in 8.4.1 also shows, attitudes to non-'natural' structures such as windfarms thus emerge as not only linked to perceptions of their visual (in)congruity with the surrounding landscape but also to pragmatic evaluations of their benefits or 'usefulness'.

8.3.2 Industry and 'nature': Acknowledging hybridity

The ease with which the mining vestiges are incorporated in perceptions of Askam as a place may be facilitated by the fact that, whilst they have been produced by human activity, the most prominent remnants consist of organic material; albeit in an altered state. However, the accounts of some residents indicate that more explicitly artificial structures may also be conceptualised as fitting in with the landscape. Although Mick dislikes the windfarm because he sees its modernity as conflicting with its rural and 'natural' surroundings, other residents do not perceive the presence of such objects negatively. My interview with Simon (see Box 8.2), for instance, revealed that, like Mick, Simon sees the abandonment of the mining remnants as having led to them becoming integrated with 'nature' in a positive way. However, in contrast to Mick, Simon appears to accept, and even appreciate, the presence of windfarms and other non-'natural' structures within the countryside. This appreciation is partly due to a more explicit acknowledgement of the landscape as made by both human and non-humans allowing him to translate this observation to more modern features. However, it is also likely to be related to Simon's passion for the environment and belief in the usefulness of windfarms, which he sees as necessary for energy production and beneficial for wildlife. A person's worldview (particularly regarding the environment) is thus an important influencing factor on pragmatic evaluations of non-'natural' structures.

Box 8.2: A hybrid countryside? A walk with Simon and Naomi

My walk with Simon, a forty-eight-year-old who moved to Askam from nearby Barrow twenty-six years ago, and his nineteen-year-old daughter, Naomi, took us along the estuary shoreline, up over the old spoil heaps and through a wooded area where evidence of the mines, such as engine-beds for the pumps that were used to drain water from the pits, remain. Simon has a passion for wildlife and local history and imparted some of his knowledge on these topics as we walked.

Plate 8.9: An old mine-pump engine-bed

As we walk through the wooded area - a semi-ancient woodland, now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – he talks

about how he is pleased the trees have survived despite being amidst the mine workings. He values the mining remnants as an aspect of Askam's heritage but likes the way that they have been re-appropriated by ecological processes:

> Simon: *"It's great that bits are still left over…They're getting taken over by the er, naturification of it."*

For Simon (like Mick), evidence of the mining industry does not detract from the 'natural' qualities of the area. Rather, he sees the vestiges' integration with 'nature' as a welcome and distinctive feature of the place. This is perhaps easy to appreciate in the case of old industrial structures that have been 're-claimed by nature', but during our conversation about the windfarms both Simon and Naomi talk about how (in contrast to Mick) they do not oppose, and even like, the juxtaposition of 'natural' and industrial features.

> RW (to Naomi): *"What do you think of the windfarm?"*
>
> Naomi: "*I like that one* (pointing to the offshore windfarm). *It looks awesome at night."*
>
> Simon: *"Yeah, it looks brilliant."*
>
> Naomi: "*It does. Because you can see all the red lights and everything."*
>
> Simon: "*The good thing about the offshores is that because there are actually new restrictions on trawling, like in between the windmills, there's a potential for them to actually build up fish stocks. And the likes of crabs and lobster and what have you. There's already signs that they're becoming artificial reefs. So if that's the case then we should actually see a rise in stocks outside. It'll be just like the Cornish boxes, where they've actually got no-trawl zones, no-take zones, about 10km square. All the Cornish were up in arms about it, saying 'bloody out of order, bloody conservationists coming in here'* (laughs), *and what's happened is there are loads of crab and lobster outside the boxes now."*
>
> RW: *"Because they've spread. Yeah, that's a good point. So you don't like these ones (*pointing to Far Old Park Windfarm) *as much then Naomi?"*
>
> Naomi: *"They're ok, but they're just kind of up there aren't they, they're very visible to everybody. But personally I kind of like the contrast between industrial type things and nature, 'cause it's kind of good. Like pylons and stuff like that. But I think as long as they're doing good, then* (sentence unfinished)."
>
> Simon: "*You know, you can actually drive along the A590 and not really notice the pylons. And yet they're there and they're in your face. We went down the docks [in Barrow] the other week and it, you've got this wealth of wildlife, you've got gas terminals and cranes and destroyers and all sorts, and it's such a unique environment. I took [some students] and did a whole day on saltmarshes and we got to the last saltmarsh, which was a totally un-grazed saltmarsh at Tummer Hill on Walney [Island]. Absolutely beautiful. But it's actually sandwiched in-between council houses, big cranes and all this industrial landscape. And, you know, you've got people throwing old beds out or old settees out on this saltmarsh that's right in the middle of an urban environment."*

Simon and Naomi's discussion indicates their awareness of the increasing integration and coming together of 'nature' and 'culture' within our surroundings. Simon's description of Barrow's docks cannot strictly be described as an explicitly post-natural conceptualisation of the world (see 2.2.4) because his account implies a clear binary distinction between 'natural' elements, such as saltmarsh and wildlife, and industrial or cultural aspects, such as the gas terminals, cranes and council houses. However, his perception of this juxtaposition as being a positive phenomenon indicates a readiness to accept a blurring between the rural and the urban; recognise hybridity; and challenge traditional ideas about urban areas being empty of nature (Castree, 2005; Hinchliffe et al., 2005).

Simon's openness to accommodating more modern non-'natural' structures such as electricity pylons and wind turbines within his perception of place was facilitated by his belief in their usefulness, but also by his drawing of parallels between them and the origins of the mining remnants. Earlier in the conversation he had commented on his thoughts at the time of Far Old Park Windfarm's construction:

> *"My thoughts were we need them. We need to be looking at other sources of energy. And put yourself in the place of somebody who lived in this area, in a total rural setting, farming and what have you, and suddenly someone says 'ooh, we've found iron ore under the ground and we're going to make this huge different landscape'. Very noisy and dirty. And, you know, a lot of people these days would really get up in arms about it. But they wouldn't actually be here without it. So, you know, you can't stand in the way of everything."*

His contention that the mines would have been noisy, dirty and incongruent with the rural setting at their time of initiation is similar to arguments that were made by Michael (see Box 8.3) and Helen Ghosh, Director General of the National Trust, who was quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Such perspectives echo that of Massey (1995, p.183), who writes, "new 'intrusions' are no more from outside, nor more out of place than were, in their time, many of the components of the currently-accepted character of the place". However, Massey's caveat – that this "does not mean that *any* new future for a place, *any* proposed development, is equally acceptable, that no positions can be taken, no political judgements made" (Massey, 1995, p.186) is also relevant here. For, Simon does not unconditionally support all new structures. He is, for instance, opposed to the idea of a tidal barrage being built across the Duddon estuary and stresses the need for projects to be well planned and environmentally benign. His opinion towards

non-'natural' structures is thus dependent more on his evaluation of their impacts (both positive and negative) on the environment (clearly a highly valued aspect of his place-based identity) than on a dislike of their visual presence in a supposedly 'natural' landscape.

We have seen here how formerly 'cultural' objects can become assimilated within the natural landscape, despite not strictly being natural in the sense of being non-human made. The mining remnants' longevity within the landscape and centrality to constructions of place identity has led to them becoming so ingrained in residents' sense of place that they have been conceptually re-worked as 'natural' and 'rural' – a process which (for some people) cannot currently be applied to windfarms, as 'modern' objects (Brittan, 2001). However, for others, such evidence of 'nature' and 'culture's co-presence facilitates a recognition of a hybrid countryside (Cloke, 2006a; Halfacree, 2006a; Murdoch, 2003; Woods, 2011; Yarwood & Charlton, 2009) and a greater accommodation of modern non-'natural' structures within their conceptualisation of place.

The 'naturalisation' of Askam's mining landscape has occurred, in part, due to the mining vestiges' unpreserved state meaning they have gradually blended into their 'natural' surroundings and into the background of everyday place-experiences (forming an unremarkable backdrop to people's 'natural attitude' (Seamon, 1980)). However, as section 8.2 showed, landscape features that are consciously maintained as cultural artefacts (and therefore 'protected' as far as is possible from 'nature') are also naturalised over time by becoming perceived as defining features of place; as symbolising the place's essence and character (Massey, 1995). This process can also be seen in the case of Goonhilly Earth Station (GES).

8.4 Goonhilly Earth Station

Plate 8.10: Goonhilly Earth Station's famous satellite dish, "Arthur" - now a Grade II listed structure

8.4.1 The role of time in valuations of heritage

Several participants in Mullion made a comparison between Goonhilly Windfarm and the satellite dishes of GES, which are situated adjacent to the windfarm site and which can similarly be seen from much of the Lizard peninsula (and further afield). These discussions revealed that perceptions of objects within the landscape are not straightforward, but are influenced by their time-deepened accrual of symbolic social and cultural meanings associated with technology, progress and heritage. The GES example is indicative of how, since social heritage is an important element of place identity and attachment (Lewicka, 2008; Mackenzie, 2004; Panelli, 2001), a feature's cultural meaning may override its technological, or even industrial, character as conflicting with the 'natural' rural landscape. However, as 8.2 and 8.3 have already indicated, heritage is a highly situated term (Harvey, 2001), and the re-framing of

features as heritage necessarily requires both time and the assignation of cultural meaning – and thus will not apply to all non-'natural' structures.

Given the prominence of the satellite dishes – distinctly non-'natural' structures - in the landscape, it might be expected that they would be disliked for their 'industrial' and prominent character, particularly by those interviewees who negatively perceived the wind turbines as modern and imposing (see 10.2.1). However, all interviewees who discussed GES did so in positive terms regardless of their attitude to the windfarm. This positivity may be partly due to GES' age (it was built in 1962) resulting in it having become a familiar part of the landscape and, for many residents, having thus 'always been there' (see also 10.3.3). However, other factors also emerged as relevant. Kimberley, who lives on the edge of Goonhilly Downs (close to both the windfarm and GES) recognised a potential contradiction in her attitudes towards the structures, as she dislikes the windfarm but views GES positively. Although Kimberley at first found it difficult to rationalise her feelings, she differentiated between the structures on the basis of GES's 'iconic' nature:

> RW: "*And what about the Earth Station and stuff like that up there, does that bother you?"*
>
> Kimberley: *"No. I mean that's, yeah. That's iconic isn't it. Which is ridiculous, because it's probably uglier than those [wind turbines], And it's not, but um* (sentence unfinished)."

The Earth Station has become an iconic site for Mullion residents not just by virtue of its longevity in the landscape, but also because of its symbolic associations with technological progress and local social history. Built in 1962, GES includes a dish nicknamed "Arthur", which was the first open parabolic dish and is famous for receiving the UK's first trans-Atlantic satellite signal. The naming of the satellite dishes after Arthurian characters (other dishes once included 'Merlin', 'Guinevere', 'Tristan' and 'Isolde') was perhaps a self-conscious attempt to situate the site in relation to Cornish

identity and ascribe it with a place-based uniqueness, and to some extent this has been successful. Several interviewees talked about visiting GES with fondness and pride:

> *"The satellite dishes, they have an elegance to them. Though I don't think they're being used now[21]. I think they've been disused, which again is a shame, because the visitor centre at Goonhilly actually was really good for people, people really enjoyed it, being taken around, and the stories of them and stuff. Somebody said they were going to bring something back but I don't know the details"* (Andrew, Mullion).

> *"There was talk of it [being redeveloped]. I'm not exactly sure what now, but when you think that's a pretty historic site now really. It really is an interesting place and it is a great shame that it's maybe not open any longer"* (Caroline, Mullion).

> Terrance: *"Well I was working in Culdrose [when GES was first built]. And they came in and took over a hangar as a workshop site and we put supplies in for their equipment. And I saw my first TV show there. And I thought, cor is that what it's like? But they had quite a number of aerials up there. It's a pity that they've moved it up to Herefordshire or somewhere."*
>
> RW: *"It must've been quite exciting at the time."*
>
> Judith: *"Oh amazing really."*

GES thus features within the personal memories and experiences of many residents and (like the place-related memories discussed in 6.5) emerged as a valued part of Mullion's identity. 'Arthur' is now protected as a Grade II listed structure under the UK's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, highlighting the site's historic and 'iconic' value. The assignation of social value to such sites as historical features of the cultural landscape appears to somehow supersede notions of aesthetic incongruence between technological objects and the surrounding 'natural' landscape. This reveals aesthetic appreciation to be highly influenced by perceptions of cultural value and social constructions of heritage. As Andrew notes below, social perceptions around technological innovation, 'progress' and heritage are fluid and changeable, as one technology becomes replaced by another. Often the pride associated with such innovation lingers on after the structure becomes redundant and

[21] At the time of fieldwork in September 2012, the GES site was being redeveloped by its new owners GES Ltd. but the visitor centre had recently been closed following the cessation of BT's operations on the site in 2008 and there was some uncertainty about the site's future.

contributes to the transformation of the site from one of innovation to one of heritage, as Andrew acknowledges:

> *"Yes [it's going to be redeveloped] in the next ten years or so… People still wanted something there but was the funding or was the motivation there, from BT to do it? And I think they just wanted to wash their hands from the whole thing, because they'd moved on…They've moved on, technology's moved on, so then it becomes, what they've done is history. You know, then it becomes an archaeological heritage site or something. Do you know what I mean? And then it goes into the remit then, does the National Trust look after it? Can they see the worth in looking after it?"* (Andrew, Mullion).

The above narratives show that, although for some people the presence of GES makes the nearby windfarm more acceptable due to their perceived similarity (see 10.5.2), for others the two sites are not comparable because GES's value derives from its historic nature and place in social memory.

A structure's perceived value might derive from its time-wrought symbolic, cultural meaning, but its original purpose and continued contribution to the aesthetic or ecological landscape can also be important in determining assessments of its worth. Peter, for instance, appreciated GES due to his perception of it as innovative, 'exciting' and positively contributing to the local economy. He also pointed out the unintended benefits of closing-off of the area for the local ecosystem:

> Peter: *"They were exciting, being space-orientated, and I remember the first sort of er, space communications through Goonhilly's satellite thing and BBC's flicker, flicker, flicker. And just think with all these arrays and – it was really quite exciting. So to actually see it for real was 'ooh, that's quite good'."*
>
> RW: *"And I suppose quite unique as well?"*
>
> Peter: *"Well there are some in Yorkshire of course, and Jodrell Bank and places, but no, you're right. It actually had huge benefits in some ways for scientific studies, because there was a fence all the way around it, so you had this enclosed area which was its own environment. And that did employ a huge number of people in the economy. An awful lot, in BT and all the rest of it…And our friend was one of the engineers who - would you believe these big dishes rotate on ball bearings - he was the guy that made sure the ball bearings were the precise size. And that was part of his responsibilities. But yeah, that was, if they were to do a Goonhilly again on the same sort of premises as they did at that point, I think that would be strongly supported*

by the local communities, because it provided all sorts [of work]. But skilled work."

Another factor influencing GES's current acceptance by, and even value to, the local community, emerges through Peter's above account. As well as being incorporated into personal experiences (through memories of working at or visiting it), GES's prior role as an integral part of the local economy and a major employer of local people has led to it becoming embedded in social memory within the village. Whilst Peter does not have a personal history associated with the site, he was proud of the work that his friend had carried out there and the circulation of such anecdotes within Mullion adds to a sense of GES as an established and valued part of the place. The positive characteristics that Peter cites regarding GES's environmental, economic and social benefits together contribute to his positive acceptance of the presence of the satellite dishes in the landscape. In contrast, as shall be discussed in 10.4.3, Peter considered such benefits to be distinctly lacking in the case of the windfarm.

8.4.2 Recognising discursive contradictions

The contradiction between perceiving old non-'natural' structures such as Goonhilly's satellite dishes as 'iconic' but modern wind turbines as unattractive and out of place in the countryside is not one which rural residents are blind to (as Kimberley's admission of the dishes as potentially 'uglier' than the turbines revealed). For some participants, this awareness of contradictions contributes to closely considered opinions, which reject notions of fixity in rural landscapes and facilitate an accommodation of more modern structures within their notion of rural place (see also Simon's account in 8.2.2). This was demonstrated most clearly by Michael, the Mullion artist introduced in Chapter Six (see Box 6.2), who pondered this issue during our conversation; see Box 8.3.

Box 8.3: Industry, time and nature: A walk with Michael

As we walk near the periphery of Predannack airfield (a World War II airfield now primarily used for military training exercises by RNAS Culdrose), the topic of windfarms leads Michael to reflect on ideas about beauty in rural landscapes and his own interest in industrial landscapes. Michael's thoughts are partly prompted by, and articulated and developed in reference to, the airfield, which, whilst associated with distinct social and technological practices, now includes both disused, overgrown areas and wildlife conservation sites.

Michael: *"I quite like [the wind turbines]. And they're doing a job. Quite how the energy sums work out I don't know but I don't think* (sentence unfinished). *People have this strange relationship don't they - with a railway we could stand here and say 'ooh, look at the old railway, it's amazing isn't it, beautiful landscape'. But 'oh look at that motorway, god isn't it ugly'."*

RW: *"Yes, what it is that makes some things beautiful and not others?"*

Michael: *"That's right. And then they say they're going to put a new railway in and they're like 'oh no no no'. And they try to close an old railway and it's 'oh no you can't close it, it's part of the landscape'… I think people at my age have this urge, don't they, to sort of lock things down and keep things as they were."*

RW: *"Yeah. So was there much fuss when the turbines went up?*"

Michael: *"No, not really. I mean lots of comments and things, and then of course they put the bigger ones up. I always love, er, the Raving Loony Party, when they had their election, in their manifesto they said all the wind turbines in Cornwall, they were going to paint the shafts green and yellow and then they'd just look like big daffodils!*

…I mean I always, before I came here, if somebody had said to me 'what sort of landscape do you find most interesting?' I would've said industrial landscapes, power stations, things like that. And maybe if instead of [my wife] and I coming down here I'd ended up in the Midlands or somewhere near, I'd have probably ended up painting industrial landscapes I think."

RW: *"Why, what interests you about that?"*

Michael: *"I don't know. I think the form is interesting but also, I don't know. That's a good question. I mean I've always, I've got drawings from the past, before I came down here, of power stations and things, er, yeah I don't know. I mean I was an engineer so maybe that's part of it. Yes, I suppose man in the landscape is always very interesting, particularly when man is doing things that are independent of the landscape. Well, independent of the aesthetics of the landscape I suppose. Then they become almost a force of nature, don't they? It's sort of different to doing things in the landscape to*

Plate 8.11: A redundant helicopter on Predannack airfield. Image © Rob Allday

make it prettier or whatever. Almost like, this airfield up here with all these buildings and old aircraft, I mean people come here and photograph the old aircraft. I imagine people think they've crashed there but they've been put there deliberately. But it is a fascinating part of the landscape and in some ways it will almost be a shame when ultimately they come and - well, they probably won't, they'll probably all be listed."

As Michael and I continue walking he picks up on this point again as we near the Windmill Farm Nature Reserve (named after a ruined seventeenth-century windmill on the site). Using the old windmill as a prompt, he expands on his thoughts about the place of industry in 'natural' landscapes, contemplating the contradictions inherent in both his own views and popular perceptions around historical and modern structures:

Michael: "*There's a windmill just over there, we can probably see it from over there, it's part of an old windmill. Put a windmill there and people think oh fine, but put a turbine there and 'oh, horrible, horrible thing'."*

RW: *"Hmm, interesting isn't it. There's something about age and history."*

Michael: "Yeah. So when man actually does go into the landscape and does things which are purposeful and there for long enough it almost becomes a force of nature. I'm not saying that's right, but it is interesting. And maybe more interesting than when we go into the landscape and say we're going to build something which will be aesthetically pleasing within the landscape."

RW: *"Yeah. It kind of accidentally becomes part of the landscape."*

Michael: *"That's right, absolutely. And that's what gives it its, er, another quality. Particularly because, as we just said, this landscape is in fact - well not quite so much this one but it is to a degree - all Cornish landscapes were industrial landscapes.*

…I'd almost rather, I've got to be careful here, but I'd almost rather they came and put a nuclear power station there than they build holiday homes going down to Soapy Cove."

RW: *"That's an interesting statement. Because it's purposeful?"*

Michael: *"It's purposeful. Well holiday homes are purposeful too I suppose, I mean why am I making distinctions between the two? I don't quite know. And maybe if I looked at that and the contradiction, there is a contradiction I think in how I'm looking at that. But yes. I remember years and years ago, it was 1974 or something, we went camping to Minsmere, it's a bird reserve on the Suffolk Coast? Anyway, so we camped there and we arrived and put up the tent, got up in the morning and it was very misty. It's very flat there and we walked out towards the sea and then as the mist cleared Sizewell, the nuclear reactor, sort of appeared on the right hand side, you know, a huge nuclear reactor. And I don't think it, it didn't detract from the view. It didn't detract from the landscape."*

Michael's statement about the difference between reactions to old and new railways highlights an important point regarding how the process of accepting, and placing cultural value upon, anthropogenic structures in 'natural' landscapes is distinctly time-wrought. In the case of heritage symbols originally built for economic or social purposes, it requires a gradual building-up of cultural meaning over time. The site progressively becomes a marker and stimulus of social memory and in doing so is

transformed from a purposeful tool of everyday life to what could be described as a formalised *lieu de memoire* (Nora, 1989) (Mullion Harbour is also a good example of this). The cultural value and aesthetic appreciation associated with much material heritage is thus time-dependent and continually fluid. Michael's description of some industrial features as becoming 'a force of nature' through temporal longevity also indicates consciousness of a blurring of the nature-culture dichotomy and of contradictions in hegemonic ideas about industry, 'nature' and heritage (echoing Simon and Naomi's discussions in 8.3.2). This explicit acknowledgement of the countryside as co-produced by both human and nonhuman forces (indicative of a post-natural philosophy) contributes towards Michael's apparent openness to accepting physical change and seeing beauty in features not conventionally considered attractive.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the ways in which non-'natural' structures in the countryside are variously considered as both congruent and conflicting with their rural surroundings. In some cases they come to be seen either as benign, or even as positive, features of place. This 'acceptance' occurs either through processes of familiarity and 'fading into the background' (Parkhill et al., 2010), or through becoming landmarks that symbolise place distinctiveness, cultural heritage and personal histories (see Hall & Robertson, 2001, on the role of public art as landmarks). These processes of acceptance and valorisation are of course complex and variable according to the landscape features in question and often require time. However, although Mullion Harbour and Askam's mining remnants are 'old' features whose original uses have become redundant, more modern structures, such as GES, windfarms and electricity pylons, can also come to be assimilated into perceptions of place and landscape. These varying interpretations of 'modern', artificial structures will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Ten through the example of windfarms.

The examples discussed here have highlighted that perceptions of non-'natural' structures and their place within rural landscapes are multiple and heterogeneous. They are not only influenced by pervasive representations of an idyllic, rural ('natural') countryside, but also by other rural discourses; personal and social memories associated with particular place-features; differing ideas about the definition and value

of cultural heritage; and varying interpretations of the temporality of place and what is 'natural' (which presume a moral judgement of 'nature' as 'good' (Setten, 2004)). Opinions are not naively held but are also shaped by pragmatic deliberations about the perceived usefulness of particular changes. In some instances, they are also influenced by an explicit recognition and philosophical contemplation of the ways in which 'nature' and 'heritage' are temporally understood and represented in popular discourse. Interpretations of non-'natural' structures include conventional perspectives that rely on a binary opposition between 'nature' and culture, but they also include perspectives that recognise discursive constructions and acknowledge the countryside as co-constituted by humans and non-humans, and, therefore, chime with post-natural accounts of a hybrid and relational 'socionature' (Anderson, 2009; Swyngedouw, 1999). This finding adds weight to Jones' (1995) assertion that lay and academic discourse are interrelated. It also suggests that there may be more opportunities than are currently recognised for effective engagement with communities about how physical changes might be managed to avoid threatening valued place-assets and to maintain place-continuity (perhaps even enhancing place-distinctiveness) as far as possible.

Chapter 9. Explaining attitudes to rural place-change: An analytical framework

9.1 Introduction

The review of literature in Chapters Two and Three identified five key factors that affect personal experiences of rural place. These were summarised in Fig. 3.1, which I repeat below for ease of reference. These elements of place experience have been drawn out with reference to the three case studies throughout Chapters Six to Eight. The factors are intricately entwined, but rural representations and personal experiences were particularly highlighted in Chapter Six, social practices and memories were examined in Chapter Seven (with particular reference to social change), and understandings of 'nature' (and temporality) have been explored in Chapter Eight (with particular reference to material change).

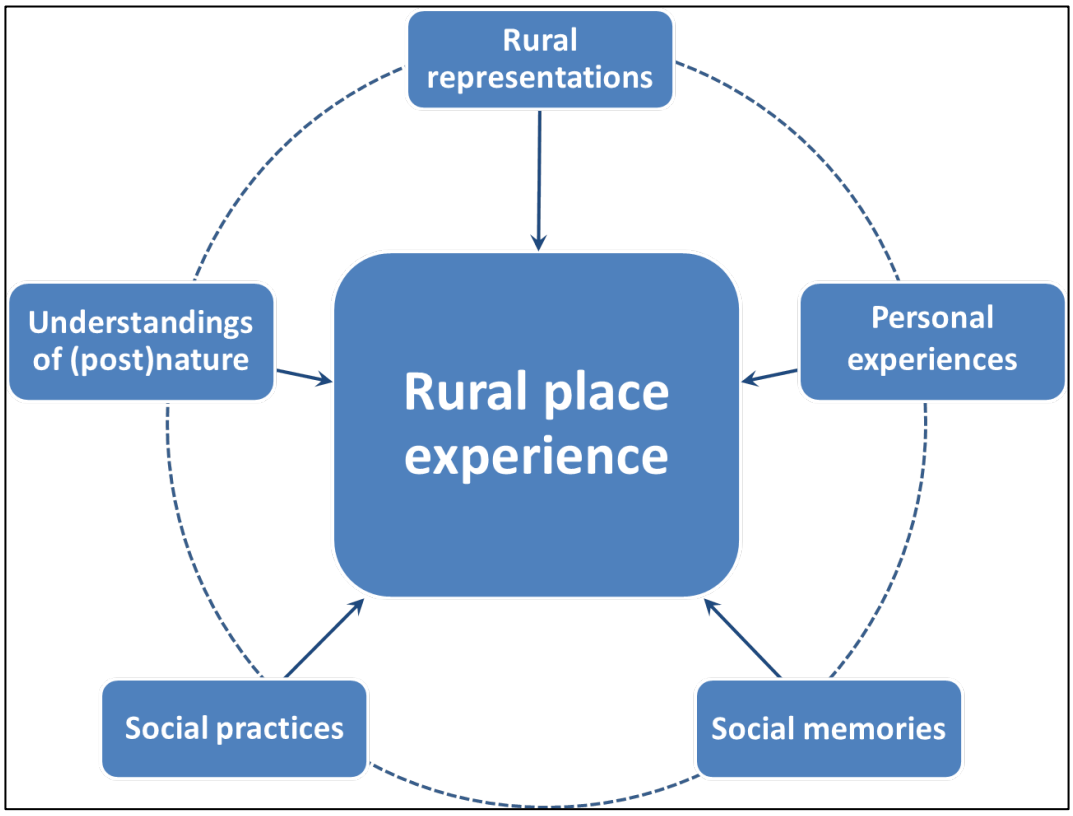


Figure 3.1: Influencers of rural place experience

From these analyses, it is now possible to draw some tentative conclusions about how these aspects of place experience contribute to individuals' interpretations of past and recent rural place-change. To do so is a challenging endeavour, as the dialectical relationships between different factors are multiple and messy, but the representation in Fig. 9.1 offers a way of enhancing understanding about such processes by making the various factors analytically identifiable. The inherent complexity of these factors and processes, however, is difficult (if not impossible) to adequately represent, and this is reflected in the complexity of the representation. Fig. 9.1 should, therefore, be seen more as a heuristic framework to assist analysis than as a complete explanatory model.

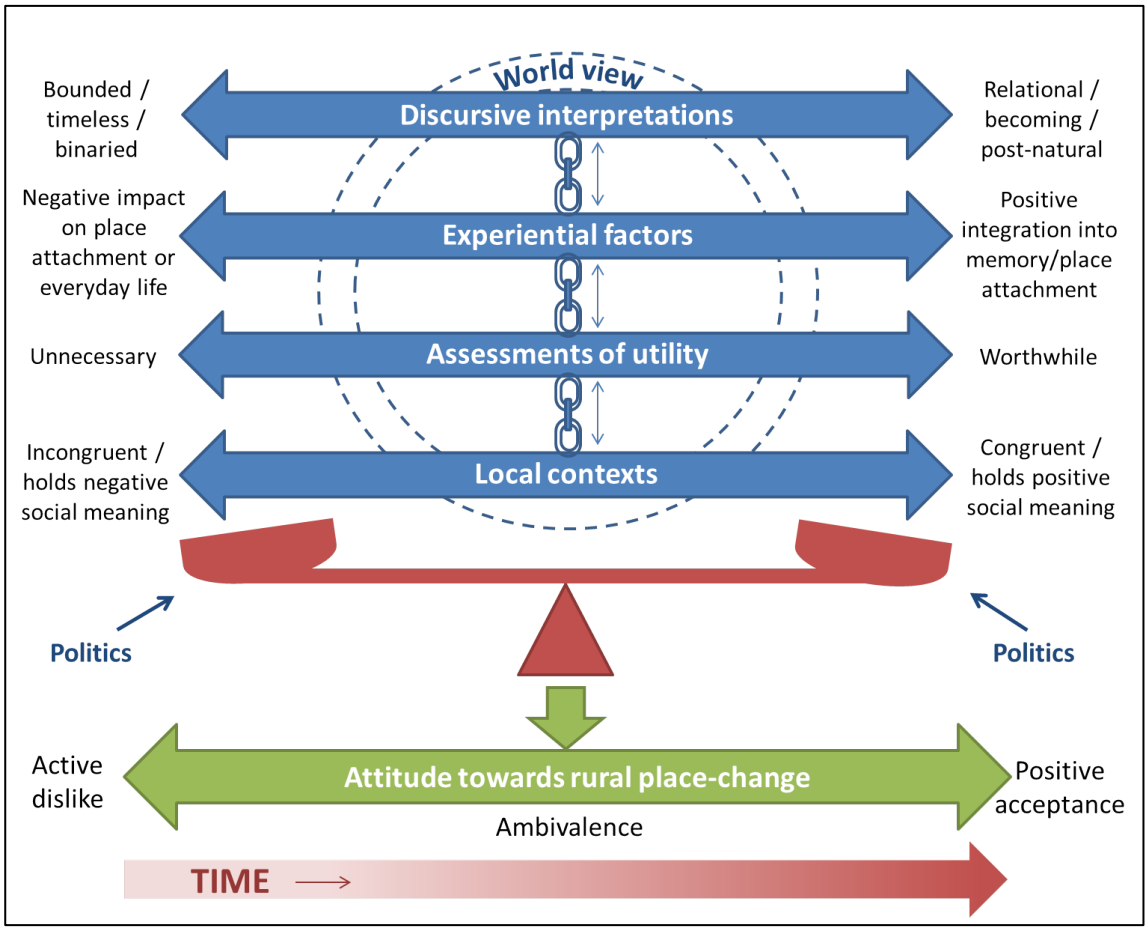


Figure 9.1: Factors shaping attitudes towards rural place-change over time: An heuristic framework

Before commencing with a detailed explanation of Fig. 9.1, it is first necessary to clarify a couple of points regarding its limits and applicability. First, the framework may be equally applied to a new/recent change (e.g. windfarms) or to an older place-feature

that has appeared within living memory but existed for some years (e.g. GES). Although the framework has relevance for understanding social change in rural areas, it is particularly suited to examining attitudes towards physical, human-induced, changes within rural landscapes – i.e. non-'natural' structures such as those discussed in Chapter Eight and windfarms (as Chapter Ten will demonstrate).

Second, the framework's unit of analysis is the individual. It is, therefore, difficult for it to depict the political complexities involved in responses to rural change at a wider community or societal level. The introductory phase of a change, in particular, will be imbued with a multitude of political agendas and pressures, which will have a significant impact on how the alteration is collectively received and potentially acted against. These political processes will have an influence over an individual's attitude to the change, but in multiple, and sometimes subtle or indistinct, ways. Political forces and the influence of others' (e.g. politicians, friends and family, the media, community groups and 'experts') opinions should, therefore, be seen as running throughout all aspects of the model and as exerting pressure on both the positive and negative side of the scales.

9.2 Explaining the framework

Fig. 9.1 is designed to represent the ways in which its four components (discursive interpretations, experiential factors, assessments of utility and local contexts) exert varying pressure on the outcome (attitude towards rural place-change), depending on the individual's interpretation of the specific change in question. These components are all dialectically interrelated and are not strictly hierarchical (as indicated by the interlocking chains and accompanying mini-arrows). They are also set against the background of a person's world view, which acts as a lens through which many of the issues and components are viewed. The world view has a lesser effect, though, on

experiential factors, as these include embodied and affective engagements with the world that are directly sensed, rather than socially filtered (Rose & Wylie, 2006, see 3.2.2).

The blue, double-ended arrows indicate spectrums of interpretation relating to each of the components, with interpretations towards the left of the figure weighting the overall balance of the process towards an active dislike of the change and interpretations towards the right weighting the process towards positive acceptance. The red scales represent this balancing of the different components. A particular individual may sit somewhere towards the left on one component but towards the right on another; the factors thereby counteracting each other to some extent. Alternatively, the individual may sit somewhere in-between the extremes for one or all of the components, which would tip the scales to a lesser extent. If the weightings are more or less equal then the person's attitude sways towards ambivalence and/or indecision. This balancing of components will become clearer as each one is explained below.

9.2.1 Discursive interpretations of rural place, (post)nature and temporality

The 'discursive interpretations' element of Fig. 9.1 principally refers to the ways in which rural place, (post)nature and temporality are perceived and conceptualised by the individual. The discussions in 6.3 revealed traces of both a 'timeless rural idyll' discourse and a more relational 'place as process/becoming' perspective within residents' perceptions of place. These perceptions are connected to similar interpretations of 'nature' as either separate or indistinguishable from 'culture'. Chapter Eight further demonstrated how these varying interpretations have implications for attitudes towards material changes to rural landscapes, with relational perspectives facilitating a more positive (or at least 'accepting') attitude. Simon's appreciation of an evolving, hybrid countryside, for instance, made it easier for him to accommodate

'modern' structures such as pylons and wind turbines into his perception of Askam than for Mick, who perceived them to conflict with their 'natural' surroundings (see 8.3).

These interpretations are not necessarily coherently held, as multiple, sometimes contradictory, discourses may be at play simultaneously (Harvey, 1996) and be variably applied by the individual, depending on other elements in the framework. Different temporal framings may also influence the relative pressure discursive interpretations exert over the attitude to change. For instance, we saw in Chapter Six how Lynette sought to preserve a particular farm because of her association of it with a romantic image of a past, simpler style of rural living (which is also related to the experientially-sourced meaning it holds for her) and because of her perception of it as 'heritage'. Yet, Lynette was not concerned about the loss of Mullion Harbour (which others perceive as heritage) because its younger age meant that it was not a part of her conceptualisation of a rural, 'historical' Mullion.

Whilst not straightforward (and also affected by other elements), I suggest that these discursive aspects of place conceptualisation are particularly influential over attitudes to change because they form a fundamental part of how a place and its temporality are understood. If a landscape is seen as stable, timeless and close to its 'natural' state, and is aesthetically and culturally valued in its specific current form, then material change is bound to pose a disruptive threat. A significant weight may thus be required on the positive side of the scales (for instance, a strong belief in the change's usefulness to society or the environment) if this resistive force is to be counteracted.

9.2.2 Experiential factors (including personal memories and embodied experiences)

This element of the framework refers to how an alteration has a positive, negative or neutral impact on the individual's everyday life and/or personal memories and

meanings they associate with a place (which form a key part of place attachment). If a change affects the everyday life of an individual by disrupting their patterns of daily activity or by creating some kind of nuisance, then that will have a negative impact. Similarly, damage to, or the disappearance of, a place-asset that an individual has fond memories of, and is particularly attached to, may also cause distress (e.g. the deterioration Martham School, the closure of pubs and K-Shoe in Askam, or the potential loss of Mullion Harbour, see 6.5, 7.3.2 and 8.2 respectively).

On the other hand, a (past) change may become regarded more positively as it becomes associated with new place-related memories and integrated into the person's place-based identity. GES, for instance, has become enrolled in Terrance's conceptualisation of Mullion partly through his memories of working on it (see 8.4.1) (though social meanings, which form part of the 'local contexts' component, are also integral to GES's acceptance). This process is particularly time dependent, however, as it usually takes time for a new object (or social composition) to be integrated into place-based memories and attachments. Familiarity over time may also reduce the awareness or salience of negative impacts and increase the 'taken-for-grantedness' of a change, thereby shifting the weight of experiential factors towards a more neutral or positive attitude (or, to the right of the scales in the diagram).

9.2.3 Assessments of utility (including costs and benefits)

'Assessments of utility' represents the more practical evaluations that residents make regarding change. This element recognises that opinions are not solely based on emotive reactions but involve a consideration of a change's costs, benefits and ultimate usefulness to the society, economy and/or environment. These costs and benefits will be variably perceived, partly depending on other elements in the framework and the individual's world view, but this is a conscious process that can counteract the effect of other components. The perceived usefulness of a change might relate to its wider

benefits (particularly in the case of windfarms, see 10.4), but it can also be place-specific. Places have their own social, economic and political contexts and complexities, including risks, opportunities, issues and priorities. Hence, changes that are perceived to maintain, enhance, or add to existing socio-economic strengths (e.g. by providing employment opportunities) will be positively regarded, whereas those that threaten these, or exacerbate existing weaknesses (e.g. by reducing the availability of affordable housing), will be opposed. Assessments of utility thus overlap with the 'local contexts' element of the framework, although are more influenced by socio-economic (rather than socio-cultural) factors.

Chapter Seven's discussions about housing development in Mullion and Askam particularly highlighted these more 'rational' aspects of individuals' thought processes. For instance, Barbara's evaluation of different housing developments in Mullion varied according to whether or not she believed that they were suitable for young families, who would benefit the village by supporting local schools and shops and contributing to the sense of community (see 7.4.2). Similarly, James stressed that, although some people dislike them, new houses and population growth in Askam has been essential for the provision of village services and facilities (see 7.3.2). Thus, if a change is considered to be purposeful and beneficial – either to the locality or wider society and environment – then it may be positively accepted (or at least not objected to), even if the individual personally dislikes it for other (e.g. aesthetic) reasons.

9.2.4 Local contexts (including social memories and shared place-meanings)

The framework's 'local contexts' component refers to the particularities of place, against which change is evaluated. This includes the socio-economic considerations of change that are consciously articulated within assessments of utility, but it is the local socio-cultural meanings associated with a place that are of particular concern.

Essentially, this component represents the degree to which a structure (or social change) is perceived to 'fit in with' the place in question.

The examination of social memory and local history practices in Chapter Seven showed that a place's history forms an important part of its identity and, as such, is something that residents will work hard to actively engage with – not necessarily in order to 'museumise' a place, but to create a sense of temporal continuity and connection with its 'roots'. This process is a distinctly social affair, as reminders of the past are carried forward through social memory, traditional 'community' practices, and shared meanings associated with particular place-features. Changes that can be easily aligned with these historically-based shared meanings and practices are, therefore, more likely to be accepted than those that threaten to distance, or disconnect, the place from them. Those that are perceived to have little or no impact (i.e. that neither conflict with, nor help maintain, existing contexts) may elicit indifferent opinions, or may result in attitudes being more greatly swayed by the other components in the framework. Again, there is a strong temporal element to this component. Chapter Eight emphasised how the social meanings and memories related to an object are accrued over time and, thus, even if something is not immediately perceived to have particular congruence, it may be incorporated into social memory and a shared sense of place identity over time. Nevertheless, as section 10.5.3 will show, acceptance can be more immediate if the change is perceived to particularly 'fit' with existing contexts.

Local contexts are particularly important because they are about the setting within which all the other elements of Fig. 9.1 are applied when the person's attitude towards a specific place-based change is formed. Perceptions of the extent to which the change is in/congruent with a particular place's physical and social identity may thus disproportionately tip the scales from an otherwise positive attitude towards a negative one, or vice versa.

9.2.5 Time

The ‘time’ arrow in Fig. 9.1 represents the way in which attitudes to a particular change may alter over time, usually in a positive direction (although if negative impacts continue or increase then this may exacerbate opposition (Haggett, 2011). As already mentioned, an object may become thought of more positively as it accrues personal and social meaning by being enrolled into place-based memories and integrated into constructions of place identity. As discussed in section 2.4.5, research has shown that attitudes towards renewable energy projects tend to become more positive with time after their installation (Eltham et al., 2008; Firestone et al., 2009; Gipe, 1995; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 2007b). Chapter Eight has also supported other studies (e.g. Orange, 2008; Parkhill et al., 2010) in showing how older structures that might initially have been unwelcome can become positively associated with place-related meanings. There is, therefore, potential for the balance of one or more individual elements of the framework – and the resulting attitude - to shift from the negative side of the model towards a more ambivalent, or even positive, position.

9.3 Conclusion

The conceptual representation – or ‘framework’ - introduced in this chapter provides a method of analytically identifying the varying factors that contribute to shaping an individual’s attitude towards rural place change. By incorporating the findings from the previous empirical chapters, it attempts to translate the various aspects of place experience (Fig. 3.1) into their relevance for understanding perceptions of change. This process is messy and multi-layered, and includes many nuances and complexities, some of which are inevitably lost in the representation of a simplified pictorial diagram. The framework is thus problematic in its attempt to simplistically represent complex and indeterminable processes that, by their very complexity, defy representation.

Nevertheless, Fig. 9.1 offers a useful starting point for examining changes within the specific contexts of the places in which they occur, whilst also allowing the influence of personal experiences and wider discursive processes that affect people-place relationships to be considered. As O'Sullivan (2004, p.293), quoting Box (1979, p.202), puts it: "All models are wrong but some are useful". His suggestion that it is "more useful to think of complex geographical models as extensions of thought experiments, where the necessary and contingent implications of theories can be examined" (2004, p.291) thus provides an apt description for how Fig. 9.1 should be viewed. The term 'framework', rather than 'model' reflects this point, as Fig. 9.1 does not pretend to depict or explain the full complexity of processes affecting attitudes to change. Rather, its value lies in making visible the various factors influencing personal attitudes to change and in providing a frame of reference for exploring these in a meaningful way. It also encourages researchers (and potentially policy-makers; see 11.2) to be aware of the multiple, complex factors involved in these processes.

The examination of attitudes towards existing windfarms (research question 3) informed the development of this analytical framework, but also demonstrates how it may be utilised. The findings to research question 3 will now, therefore, be explored in Chapter Ten using the framework to guide discussions.

Chapter 10. Attitudes to existing windfarms as an example of landscape change

10.1 Introduction

This chapter applies the ideas introduced in Fig. 9.1 to the case of windfarms to unpack some of the interconnections it seeks to represent. The focus on windfarms provides a contextual example within which to consider how discursive ideas about rurality, (post)nature and place temporality, experiential factors, assessments of utility, and local contexts work together to influence attitudes towards rural place-change. This extends Chapter Eight's discussions about older non-'natural' structures by applying the framework to a more recent (but established) alteration to rural landscapes. The chapter demonstrates the usefulness of the framework, but also makes a specific contribution to the literature around renewable energy by exploring local perceptions of established (rather than new or proposed) windfarms.

Using Fig. 9.1 as a frame of reference to explore attitudes towards windfarms provides analytical clarity by organising the material into broad themes. This helps draw out some of the complex factors that lie behind the formation of opinions, but should not be seen as slotting components into predetermined 'boxes'. The framework's elements are intentionally loosely defined and many of the opinions could have been (and, in some cases, are) included under more than one 'heading', reflecting the relational nature of the processes through which attitudes are shaped. Significant overlaps and interrelations thus occur between the sections, and these are drawn out where appropriate.

Before the factors influencing attitudes are discussed, section 10.1.1 provides an overview of the range of attitudes found within the case studies. These attitudes will be

examined in more detail as the chapter progresses, but they serve here to set the context for the discussions by summarising the general trends emerging from the interview findings. The findings are then presented according to the different elements identified in Fig. 9.1.

10.1.1. Overview of attitudes

Interestingly, very few interviewees initiated conversations about the windfarms; most only expressed a view about them once prompted. When asked about changes that had occurred since they had lived in the village, participants generally focused on housing developments and social changes, as discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. The windfarm did not appear to be significant enough to feature in their initial discussions. This may be partly due to the windfarms' peripheral locations outside the main villages (particularly in Mullion and Martham) resulting in participants not including them in their conceptualisation of changes in the immediate area. However, it is also indicative of the extent to which the windfarms have, over the 15 to 21 years that they have existed, become a familiar part of the background in terms of people's everyday lives and perceptions of place (see 10.3.1). Once I had raised the topic, a large proportion of interviewees did not express particularly strong opinions about the windfarm – either positive or negative. Rather, most were either indifferent or expressed a mixture of qualified approval and scepticism. Some barely discussed their opinion at all, moving quickly on to other topics they saw as more important.

Although attitudes towards the windfarms were notably ambivalent in many cases, instances of strongly positive and negative opinions were also present. A relatively large group of interviewees expressed positive opinions about their local windfarm (and windfarms more generally). These people endorsed the windfarm's presence (though were not necessarily strong pro-windfarm campaigners) for a range of reasons, including perceiving them as aesthetically pleasing, environmentally beneficial and/or a

source of pride for the area (see 10.2.3). There were also a few interviewees who displayed conditional support; i.e. their general acceptance of the windfarm was qualified according to the specificities of its location (conditional support may also be related to other factors such as perceived fairness in the decision-making process; see Wolsink 2007a).

On the negative end of the spectrum, visual impact and lack of efficiency emerged as particularly prevalent issues, although other concerns, such as impacts on wildlife and fisheries and a perceived lack of benefit to the host community, were also mentioned. These reflect pre-installation concerns, which include visual impact (Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Pasqualetti, 2000; Wolsink, 2007a; 2010); distributional and procedural injustice (Graham et al., 2009; Haggett, 2008); environmental impacts (Warren et al., 2005); and a lack of true community benefits (Cowell et al., 2011). The strength of this concern, however, was more limited in the case of these operational windfarms, with relatively few interviewees expressing highly negative opinions. Importantly, though, a larger group of people - whilst not strongly disliking the windfarm - expressed considerable cynicism about wind energy's efficiency and level of government subsidy (see 10.4).

Although a range of attitudes were found among interviewees from all three case studies, there were subtle differences in the prevalence of certain perceptions, and in the framing of particular arguments, between each of the villages. Most notably, scepticism was particularly apparent in Askam, conditional support was highlighted in Mullion, and positive endorsement emerged as particularly interesting in Martham. Each case study is thus discussed in more detail in 10.5. Exploring these variations highlights the importance of the 'local contexts' element of Fig. 9.1.

10.2 Discursive interpretations of rural place, temporality and (post)nature

Using the analytical framework of Fig. 9.1 as a guide encourages the influence of varying interpretations of rural place, temporality and (post)nature over attitudes to windfarms to be considered and identified. A number of interesting findings relating to these themes emerged from the interviews and are discussed in this section. These include differing interpretations of the windfarms as; conflicting with the aesthetic, timeless and 'natural' character of the countryside; or as congruent with its hybrid, processual and progressive co-construction. However, as Fig. 9.1 seeks to represent, these are not simple binary opinions. They reflect a spectrum of ideas that may or may not be cohesively and consistently held by individuals. This section explores some of the ways these interpretations emerged within the interviews.

10.2.1 Incongruous 'eyesores' in a rural landscape

As discussed in 2.4.2, several authors have suggested that opposition to proposals for new windfarms is generated by a perceived mismatch between artificial, technological (and therefore societal) wind turbines and the 'natural', rural landscapes within which they are located (Brittan, 2001; Pasqualetti, 2001; Short, 2002; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 2007a; Woods, 2003b). Traces of this clash between windfarms and discursive representations of the English countryside also emerged in my findings, as the conversation with Mick (see Box 8.1) has already shown. Mick disliked the windfarm partly because he perceived it as standing out from its 'natural' surroundings (and partly because he perceived it to be inefficient; see 10.4). The intensity of his dislike for the windfarm was demonstrated by the fact that (as only one of two participants who brought up the windfarm topic without being prompted), his very first comment in the interview was: *"Now I'll tell you what I can't stand, and that's those* (pointing at the windmills)*. I hate them".* Although his dislike was particularly directed at the Far Old Park windfarm in this instance, his aversion was not based on objecting to the local windfarm in particular (as might be portrayed by NIMBY arguments); it applied

to all windfarms. In discussing his opinion, Mick talked about another 'pristine' view that has been obscured by windfarms:

> *"See where I come from originally, I come from Sheffield, and it's actually worse over there. If you go over to Sheffield now you go over a lovely road called the Woodhead Pass, which takes you over the moors from Manchester. And you get to the top of Woodhead Pass and the view was pristine, you could look down and you could see Sheffield, you could see Barnsley. You know, all laid out in front of you. You can't now, it's just wind turbines. And you know, we're going the same way here"* (Mick, Askam).

Interestingly, the view Mick refers to includes the urban areas of Sheffield and Barnsley. Whilst these cities are unlikely to be included in Mick's conceptualisation of the countryside, their juxtaposition with the surrounding moorland is a long-standing and familiar feature of this landscape, allowing Mick to see them as simply a small part of it when viewed from a distance. The ingress (and 'newness') of windfarms has altered this composition, resulting in Mick perceiving the turbines as dominating the view and obscuring its 'rural' character.

Participants in the other villages who strongly disliked the local windfarm also did so partly on the basis of its perceived visual prominence and incongruence with the countryside. For instance:

> *"Oh eyesore! It's an eyesore. It stands out everywhere… the big one you can see from all around. Don't matter where you go, it stands out like a sore thumb"* (Bruce, Martham).

> *"They've really screwed up in many extents some rather beautiful clefts of the countryside, all over. You know, all over the country, not just Cornwall"* (Peter, Mullion).

Again, this visual impact usually applied to all rural windfarms, rather than just the local one. However, importantly, whilst objecting to the presence of the windfarm, these people all continue to have a strong positive relationship with the place and landscape. Although the windfarm detracts from their enjoyment of it to some extent, the impact appears to be limited enough not to significantly damage the overall character and

identity of the villages. For instance, one participant who did not look favourably upon the windfarm was Kimberley, who lives only a few hundred metres away from the Goonhilly windfarm near Mullion. Kimberley dislikes the current turbines[22], primarily because of the noise they make and her belief that they are inefficient. However, Kimberley took a reasoned approach to the issue, explaining that, *"it wouldn't have put us of buying [the property]".* She spoke very positively about the area and the rural way of life she now enjoys (having moved from an urban area in Hertfordshire) and, although she would rather it was not there, the windfarm did not affect her overall attachment to the area. This finding does not, however, belittle the importance of attending to concerns over existing windfarms; a point I return to in 11.4.3.

10.2.2 Farming the wind: A productive countryside

Evidence of perceptions of windfarms as incongruous 'eyesores' in a rural landscape provides further support to arguments that opposition is related to discourses of idyllic rurality. However, alternative rural discourses and beliefs about how the countryside should or should not change also exist, and these have implications for how windfarms are interpreted within this context. Unlike studies that have focused solely on explaining opposition, Woods (2003b) and Vergunst et al. (2009) have shown that these alternative discourses can influence positive attitudes towards windfarms. As discussed in 2.4.4, they argue that rural residents who see the countryside as a site of production (often those whose families have had a practical engagement with the land for generations) are more likely to view windfarms as simply another type of land management and resource-use and, therefore, as congruent with the countryside's purpose.

[22] As explained in 4.3.1, the Goonhilly windfarm originally consisted of fourteen turbines but these were replaced in 2010 by six larger turbines. The original turbines were not visible or audible from Kimberley's house, whereas the new ones are.

Woods' and Vergunst's arguments are supported by this research, as similar examples emerged from the interviews (see also Box 10.2). For instance, one Askam resident, Roz, perceived windfarms to be congruent with Cumbria's natural resource-use and strong association with farming (see Box 10.1). These discursive influences combined with Roz's interpretation of the windfarms as congruent with the specific local history of engineering and manufacturing in West Cumbria to shape her positive attitude.

Box 10.1: Productivist continuity: A walk with Roz

Roz is a fifty-two-year-old returnee to the Askam area. She was born and grew up in Askam but moved to Manchester as an adult for career purposes, before moving back to the area nine years ago; principally because she believes it provides her two children with a better quality of life. She now lives in nearby Ulverston but retains close links to the village through family, friends and her involvement with the Askam and Ireleth Women's Institute. Roz is a keen walker and invited me to join her on her weekly ten-mile walk with her dog around the eastern part of the Furness peninsula. As we walk, I ask her about her opinion of windfarms, including the Far Old Park windfarm at Askam and others in the area:

> Roz: *"I'm all for them. I would dispute all the claims about noise, the sun flicker and so forth. As I drive to work, there's one point just before I descend into Millom where I can see right out towards the Irish Sea and I can see hundreds of turbines out at sea[23], and it just looks fantastic. And an utterly sensible use of space, gleaning natural resources. It's an immensely sensible use of natural resources where we live."*
>
> RW: *"Did you move back after the ones in Askam were built?"*
>
> Roz: *"Yes. And I think they look really graceful. They are beautiful."*
>
> RW: "*Was it quite a noticeable change, with you coming back and them not being there before?"*
>
> Roz: "*It was. Because coming from the Manchester area where there aren't any, to suddenly come over the hillside and 'oh'…But it's quite a sensible and logical thing to do around here because of the strength of the wind coming off the Irish sea… And a lot of people work on them and it makes sense with the shipyard and everything in Barrow, you know, it makes sense to continue that legacy of engineering. They've got those huge great sheds there, which you could probably use to make turbines."*

Whilst not from a land-management background (although her father did sometimes work as a farm labourer), Roz displays an overtly practical, productivist attitude towards the countryside and the multiple windfarms in the Furness area. This positive perception is likely to be bolstered by her environmental values (the 'assessments of utility' element of Fig. 9.1), but it is also linked to an emphasis that she places on rural change as something to be celebrated (i.e. her interpretation of place temporality as relational and processual). As we walk through the countryside,

[23] Roz is referring here to the Ormonde and Walney windfarms offshore from Barrow. On a clear day these are also visible from the estuary shoreline at Askam.

Roz makes several comments about how she regularly walks the same paths because she enjoys marking the changes that she sees; on a weekly, seasonal and yearly basis (see 6.7). As we saw in 7.5.3, Roz believes that, *"places shouldn't remain static"* and sees change as a sign of life and vitality in rural areas. For her, then, the introduction of windfarms into the landscape of her childhood does not pose a negative disruption or threat to it, but is simply another change in the temporal life of the place. Roz's acceptance of windfarms as a logical and practical part of the place's progression also facilitates/is facilitated by a perception of such productivity as congruent with the place's socio-economic history as an area with close links to both agricultural production and engineering in the nearby industrial centre of Barrow (i.e. the 'local contexts' element of Fig. 9.1).

For Roz, windfarms are aesthetically pleasing, environmentally beneficial and perfectly in-keeping with the area's historical association with both farming and engineering. However, positive perceptions of the windfarms were not necessarily based on (nor guaranteed by) an explicitly productivist outlook. They were also bound up with ideas about technology and progress (i.e. interpretations of (post)nature and temporality). These were most apparent in discussions about the windfarms' aesthetic qualities, as I discuss below.

10.2.3 Rural technology and 'progress'

Visual dislike of wind turbines, such as that discussed in 10.2.1, was not widespread among interviewees. In fact, most participants did not find the windfarm aesthetically displeasing, with some even appreciating the turbines as objects of beauty. For instance, the local windfarms were variously described as *"magnificent"* (Emma, Mullion), *"brilliant" (*Monica, Martham and Dawn, Martham), *"awesome"* (Naomi, Askam), *"beautiful"* (Jill, Mullion), *"majestic" (*Rachel, Mullion) and *"graceful"* (Roz, Askam). Part of this aesthetic appreciation appears to be linked to an interest in, and admiration of, wind turbines as technological objects (in a similar way to the appreciation of GES, discussed in 8.4.1). This admiration does not conflict with the value these participants place on the rural landscape and can even enhance it.

For those that perceive beauty in the windfarms, the turbines are not seen as conflicting with the character of the countryside as a 'natural' and timeless place, but as

evidence of its ongoing evolution. The windfarms were interpreted by some participants as a positive aspect of place identity and point of pride due to their technological innovativeness and environmental symbolism. For instance, one Martham resident, Chris, talked about how he thinks the windfarm *"fits in"* with Norfolk because it is *"green"*.

Judith and her husband Terrance, who have lived in Mullion for fifty-five and eighty-nine years respectively and are strongly attached to the area, also thought about the windfarm in positive terms. Judith stated: *"It was one of the first ones…We can see it from our top window and we've always been quite proud of it really"*. In discussing the windfarm, they linked it to other technological histories and innovations in the area, talking about how it was on the site of an old WWI Royal Naval air station and going on to talk about Marconi's wireless station on the nearby Poldhu cliffs[24]. For them, these sites are not intrusions on the landscape, but indications of Mullion's role in technological 'progress' and evidence that "*there's just so much happening really*" (Judith). This sense of pride in the windfarm as being part of something modern, interesting and positive was also present in the narratives of other participants. For instance:

> *"We tried to sell our house about 4 years ago and you can see the whole row of them.... And when we were selling our house, there's this beautiful view across Goonhilly and somebody came to our house and said 'oh, you can see the wind turbines, it must cause disturbance' and I said 'well actually I think they look beautiful, they look to the future. I don't have a problem at all'. I thought 'why are you upset about the wind turbines?'"* (Melanie, Mullion)

> *"I mean the whole of the, offshore windfarms are booming, but they're just there. And I don't know, I suppose it's progress isn't it"* (Lisa, Askam).

As with the social changes discussed in Chapter Seven, material changes can, therefore, be seen as positive phenomena that indicate vitality and 'progress' for a

[24] Poldhu Wireless Station was the site from where Guglielmo Marconi's transmitter sent the first trans-Atlantic radio message to Newfoundland in 1901. The site was cleared in 1935 but is now marked by a monument to Marconi and a small museum, 'The Marconi Centre'.

place, rather than as threatening its identity in a negative manner[25]. This emphasis on 'progress' within the countryside runs counter to notions of rural timelessness engendered within idyllic images by highlighting a rural place's dynamism. It also challenges negative stereotypes of remote rural areas as stagnant and 'backward' (Cloke, 1997; Woods, 2005a). Hence, from this perspective, 'technology' is perceived not as an 'unnatural' intrusion on rural place, but as a positive asset indicating temporal process and vitality. This demonstrates that, like tidal (Devine-Wright, 2011b) and wave (Bailey et al., 2011; McLachlan, 2009) technologies, it is possible for windfarms to be seen as positive symbols of place (see also Musall & Kuik, 2011).

This assimilation of wind farms into positive place perceptions is a subjective process, however, which is shaped by particular interpretations that are not shared by all residents. As McLachlan argues in relation to wave energy, "the multiple interpretations of place and technology offer a number of reasons for assessments of congruence and incongruence between the place and the technology" (McLachlan, 2009, p.5348). Nevertheless, such positive associations may open up possibilities for windfarms to be seen in the future as possessing a cultural heritage value similar to that held by GES today. Such potential is also indicated by the interest that historic wind turbines can muster, which is exemplified by the presence of a Wind Energy Museum at Repps, two miles from Martham. The museum hosts an array of old windmills and wind-pumps from around the world, collected by the late Ronald Morse, who was fascinated by them. The museum also owns a restored wind-pump on the nearby River Thurne. One of my Martham interviewees, Vernon, is a volunteer at the museum and took me on a tour of the site, which includes nine working turbines (see Plate 10.1). Vernon spoke about how some of the turbines were built from a purely practical point of view, whilst others also explicitly considered aesthetics. He noted, though, how aesthetic appreciation is subjective, pointing out one small Australian turbine that his colleague

[25] This is perhaps amplified in the context of perceived economic and/or community decline, where 'progress' is particularly welcomed.

thinks is ugly but that he particularly likes. For Vernon, there was *"something pleasing about its practicality and simplicity"*. He also saw the other turbines as *"beautiful"* and *"lovely bits of engineering".*

Plate 10.1: Three of the historic wind turbines at the Wind Energy Museum near Martham

Of course, this example is distinct in its application to historical wind-pumps, which may have a particular appeal due to their heritage qualities (although Vernon was also supportive of the modern turbines). However, like the case of GES, it reiterates the potential for a technology to be accepted as part of a hybrid countryside and valued for its aesthetic and scientific interest. This potential increases over time, particularly if the technology builds up cultural value by becoming positively incorporated into the social memories and collective sense of identity associated with a place (see 10.5).

10.3 Experiential factors

Chapter Six established that personal experiences and memories of rural landscapes – relating to both place-of-residence and other places the person has known (either directly or through representations) - form an important part of how people relate to places and construct place identities. The everyday social life and 'sense of community' within the villages were also shown in Chapter Seven to be important to people's

everyday experiences of a place. A person's response to material change within these valued places is, therefore, likely to be influenced by the extent to which that change impacts upon the personal meanings they associate with the place and upon their social activities (and whether that impact is positive or negative). In line with this expectation, a focus on the 'experiential factors' element of Fig. 9.1 revealed that participants frequently spoke about the windfarm in terms of its impact (or, more commonly, lack of) on their everyday lives and personal place-related meanings.

10.3.1 (Lack of) impacts on everyday lives

The most prevalent attitude towards the local windfarm in all three case studies (but Martham and Mullion in particular; see 10.5.2) was one of ambivalence. Several participants talked about how they are completely unaffected by the local windfarm and, therefore, do not have a problem with it. For instance, Elizabeth commented on the visibility of the turbines, but had no complaints about its presence:

> *"The windfarm? I've no objection to it. I mean it doesn't impinge on much. Apart from the fact that as we drive over the green it looks as though it's in the back garden, the big turbine* (laughs). *But then there's no disturbance or interference from it"* (Elizabeth, Martham).

Much of this ambivalence arises from a sense of familiarity that residents have with the windfarm, having lived with it for several years (or having moved to the area when it was already in place). This familiarity means that many residents do not notice the windfarm on an everyday basis, as my interview with Derek revealed (see Box 10.2).

Box 10.2: Unawareness of the windfarm: A walk with Derek

Derek is a seventy-four-year-old lifelong resident of Mullion. He comes from a farming family and has lived and worked on a number of farms during his life (though has also worked as a builder). He and his wife, Rachel, own and live on a farm on the edge of Mullion where Rachel grew up, which is now run by their son and daughter-in-law. During our walk, Derek took me to a couple of farms that were significant in his life, relaying his memories of working in particular fields and pointing out changes that have occurred as a result of changing land-management practices since then. The land, along with his practical engagement with, and personal memories of, it, thus emerged as an important element of Derek's relationship with the place.

When I ask Derek about his thoughts on how the windfarm has changed this landscape to which he is so attached, he explains that it has had very little effect and he is unaware of it most of the time:

> Derek: *"Well, strangely enough, you'll see when I take you around our farm, it's up there, I can spend days and days there working and not know it's there at all. You hear people say 'oh the noise from the windfarm' and things like that. But they're not any trouble."*
>
> RW: *"Can you see it from there?"*
>
> Derek: *"Oh yeah yeah. They tore the first ones down and built even bigger ones."*
>
> RW: *"Do you prefer the ones as they are now, or like they were?"*
>
> Derek: *"It don't make any difference to me really."*

Later, we end the walk at Derek's farm and he takes me up into one of the fields closest to the windfarm (approximately three-quarters of a mile away), from where the turbines are clearly visible on the skyline. Here, he observes their operation but reiterates their unobtrusive nature:

> Derek: *"There they are [the wind turbines]. I would've thought they'd be going faster today. They've got to be going a certain speed to charge. But I don't notice them at all".*

When we return to the farmhouse and have a cup of tea with Rachel, Derek mentions our conversation about the windfarm to her:

> Derek: *"We went up the lane to the back field and I showed her the view of the windfarm from there. Becca's interested in what people think of them."*
>
> Rachel: *"I don't mind them at all. Do you mind them Derek?"*
>
> Derek: *"No, I don't mind it at all. They don't bother me, I hardly know they're there."*
>
> Rachel: *"I think they're majestic. Even though they are steel and industrial, they don't look like it, they look majestic. If I was younger I reckon I'd put one on the farm."*

Rachel clearly thinks positively about the turbines and her comment about putting one up herself indicates her acceptance of it as a sensible land-management practice that, furthermore, can be aesthetically admired (indicating a relational link/blurring between 'discursive interpretations' of rural place, 'experiential factors' and 'assessments of utility'). It is also apparent from Derek and Rachel's conversation that the windfarm is not a subject that they have previously discussed at any great length. This further reiterates their perception of the windfarm as an unremarkable part of the landscape that does not prompt extensive discussion.

In Derek's case, the assimilation of the windfarm into the backdrop of everyday life may be related to the close, practical relationship – or consubstantiality (Gray, 2000, see

6.2) - that he has with the land, and to his productivist conceptualisation of the countryside. Vergunst et al. (2009) argue that crofters on the Isle of Skye are relatively accepting of their local windfarm because their historical, practical engagement with the land enables them to recognise it as evolving and shaped by human activity (see 2.4.4). Concurrently, Derek does not see the windfarm as anything out of the ordinary, but as one element in the changing nature of the landscape. His personal experience of the windfarm as benign is thus facilitated, and reiterated, by his discursive interpretation of rural place; demonstrating the intertwining and dialectical nature of these two factors.

Farmers or other 'locals' who are particularly 'tied-to' the land are not the only ones for whom the windfarms were accommodated into everyday life. As Charlie (a lifelong Askam resident) and Margaret (a resident of Martham for only six years) implied, the windfarm's lack of significant impact on, and assimilation into, their everyday personal experiences of place have resulted in it becoming absorbed as part of their 'natural attitude' towards their lifeworlds (Seamon, 1980):

> *"Well we've been up running around them and stuff, and they're just there. They've been there since the early 1990s and we're just used to them"* (Charlie, Askam).

> *"I've never given it a second thought. I don't mind them at all. In fact I quite like them"* (Margaret, Martham).

When prompted to think about it, Margaret conveyed a positive opinion, but her lack of pre-considered support indicates that it is not a subject she has given thought to, or that frequently occurs in conversation (at least within her social group). It is likely, though, that had Margaret been exposed to extensive controversy about the windfarm, or had a new proposal been perceived as affecting her, she would have given the subject more reflection. The lack of community discussion about the windfarms is particularly pertinent in Askam, where the windfarm provoked significant local protest at the time of

its construction, but does not now form a major topic of conversation within the village. As Jess, a member of the parish council, told me:

> *"I don't think the efficiency or anything like that is discussed around the village. Generally, if you were to approach somebody on the street in Askam, I don't think it's something that people have a great opinion on. Honestly, I've never heard a conversation from anybody, apart from who lives right nearby, on the windfarms. It's not something I've ever heard really - the public opinion on them. Anything I know about them is more of a national level, what you see in the media, as opposed to people here in Askam"* (Jess, Askam).

This lack of continued controversy within Askam suggests that the long-term presence of the windfarm, and current absence of a further threat of landscape change, has resulted in potentially strong emotions lying dormant (their continued, underlying presence is revealed in 10.5.1).

The accounts discussed here indicate that, for many residents, the windfarms are now taken for granted as accepted parts of the places. However, the lack of expressed opinion does not necessarily mean these interviewees are especially pro-windfarms. As Justin's account reveals (see Box 10.3), ambivalent statements say nothing about beliefs in the technology's value or effectiveness in combating issues such as climate change and energy security. They simply display an indifference towards the local windfarm due to its lack of impact. Thus, in reference to Fig. 9.1, a lack of impact on 'experiential factors' may (to some extent) counteract a negative 'assessment of utility'; tipping the scales towards a more ambivalent attitude.

Box 10.3: Windfarms as benign: A conversation with Justin

Justin, a fifty-year-old lifelong resident of Martham, is strongly attached to the village, particularly valuing its 'sense of community' and displaying a keen interest in its social history. As an owner of a business in the centre of Martham, he is also well-known by other residents and plays an active role in 'community' events and activities.

When I ask Justin about his views on the windfarm, he tells me about how he does not object to its presence - and even finds it attractive - but emphasises that this does not equate to an endorsement of their financial or environmental worth:

RW: *"And what do you think of the windfarm?"*

Justin: *"Yeah fine. I was interviewed actually on the television about that. They were doing a story about another village which was now going to have, or possibly have, a windfarm. They were asking people's opinion on it. And I got a bit misquoted on it by some people, because they said 'oh you said you love windfarms, but there's no money in them' and all that. And I said 'well no, I wasn't asked if I thought they were a financial success, I was asked do you mind living near a windfarm?' And I said no I don't mind living near a windfarm at all. I find them attractive to look at, there's no noise, don't know they're there really. If I was asked do you think it would be a good thing in the future to invest in windfarms as a financially viable thing, I would've said I don't know. Because some people say they don't make the money. But it doesn't bother me at all, I think they're fine. We're an area of windmills aren't we, really. We've always had them here, so what goes around comes around."*

Justin's attitude to the windfarm's presence thus emerges as based primarily on his experience of living with it (although he also perceives it to be congruent with the area's history of windmills – i.e. local context; see 10.5.3). The economic and environmental debates around wind energy's efficiency and worth, which are prominent in debates at the proposal stage (Devine-Wright, 2005), do not significantly affect his feelings about the windfarm. To Justin, there is a clear distinction between the questions of whether he minds living with one and of whether they are cost-effective. However, some community members who oppose windfarms were critical of Justin's television interview because they feared his stance would be seen as endorsing the technology:

RW: *"But people took objection to what you said on the TV did they?"*

Justin: *"Some people did. Some people who are against them windfarms, 'cause there's a big thing - at Somerton where the windfarms are, they're now going to take down all those little ones and have two bigger ones to replace them. I think some people are against having two bigger, gigantic windmills. So one or two people came in and said 'argh, what are you doing? Saying you don't mind windfarms?' But as I say, they just asked me if I mind living near them and I don't."*

RW: *"Did they interview other people in the village as well?"*

Justin: *"They did, yeah. And I think most people were like me and said they didn't mind them being there. Which is what they asked them - they actually asked them 'do you mind living near a windfarm?'"*

Although the television interview primarily concerned a planned windfarm elsewhere, its coincidental timing with plans for the re-powering of Blood Hill Windfarm appears to have contributed to the criticism that Justin faced from objectors, as his view may have conflicted with arguments that they were putting forth. The politics around existing windfarms thus do not entirely disappear over time, but can lie dormant until reignited by a new change. Nevertheless, although some people continue to dislike the windfarm's presence, its lack of impact over most people's everyday life appears to strongly contribute to a perception of it as benign. On the other hand, for opponents of the windfarm, the experience of living with it can exacerbate their dislike for it if their doubts are confirmed (see 10.4.1).

As cautioned by the discussions in Box 10.3, the prominence of ambivalent attitudes should not necessarily be taken as meaning that the windfarms have universally become benign and uncontroversial features of the landscapes. The views of the few objectors spoken to were strong and reasoned and, therefore, should not be dismissed. However, the ambivalence is indicative of how constructions of place identity can adjust according to contemporary, as well as past, materialities and representations. For many with ambivalent attitudes, the windfarms have simply become an unremarkable part of the place and assimilated into the background of everyday life. As one Martham resident, Wendy, said, *"they're just part of the village".* Whilst not necessarily a celebrated or defining characteristic of the place, the windfarm has nevertheless become an aspect of its identity. This should not be construed as meaning that 'ambivalent' residents would necessarily support more wind turbines in the area, as their tolerance/mild support may be specifically tied to the particular form and location of the windfarm that they are familiar with (see 10.5). However, these findings may offer lessons for considering how future proposals (for either windfarms or other structures) can seek congruence with existing landscape meanings and features in a way that facilitates processes of familiarisation.

10.3.2 Personal memories and place-meanings

For some residents, the local windfarm has become a positive part of the place's identity because its distinctiveness in the landscape marks it out as a unique feature. A number of participants made remarks along these lines. For example:

> *"Well they've become a bit of a landmark to us really. You know, we come off the A30 and we see the first set, and then you can see the next set in the distance"* (Philippa, Mullion).

> *"And it does rather stand out now as a landmark. There wasn't anything outstanding about that particular view from the dunes before. Before, you used to sort of, if you plot over to Caister, you saw all these windmills and church towers, and now obviously ships can add the windfarm as a landmark"* (Elizabeth, Martham).

Echoing the findings of Parkhill et al. (2010) regarding nuclear power stations (see 2.4.3), windfarms can come to be seen as familiar landmarks that help people navigate within the landscape and position themselves in relation to 'home'. For people such as those quoted above, the windfarms have become incorporated into the personal meanings associated with the place where they live. This process can also occur through the incorporation of the windfarm into particular personal memories. For instance:

> *"Our eldest son is fascinated by them…as a really young boy we used to have to go up and just sit and look at them. It was just the spinning, he just loved it"* (Monica, Martham).

For Monica (who is strongly supportive of the windfarm), the turbines evoke an important memory relating to her son's childhood and have thus come to hold a particular meaning for her (and her son). The accrual of positive memories associated with the windfarm thus contributes to Monica's acceptance and appreciation of them within Martham.

The fascination that Monica's young son displayed towards the windfarms was also shared by some adult participants who, as discussed in 10.2.3, appreciated the turbines for their technological or engineering qualities. As well as being influenced by discursive and symbolic associations between windfarms and social or technological progress, however, I suggest that the sense of awe and fascination inspired by the turbines is also facilitated by an embodied experience of them within the landscape. Being able to walk beneath, sit under, or touch the turbines enables their size and form to be sensed relative to the landscape within which they are situated, rather than purely from a pictorial perspective. Jane, for instance, talked about how walking under and around Far Old Park Windfarm emphasises the turbines' size:

> *"I find them fascinating actually because they're so, so big. Erm, they've got a little set of steps up to them with a little door in it, you know. And then there's this massive thing above it"* (Jane, Askam).

Another Askam resident, Jim, displayed a certain fascination with the wind turbines, despite disliking them aesthetically. Having already discussed it during the first part of the interview in Jim's home, we then walked up to and around the windfarm, as he was keen for me to experience being underneath them as a way of appreciating the turbines' magnitude. As we approached, he asked whether I had ever touched a wind turbine (I hadn't) and, saying that he hadn't either, wondered whether they vibrated and made a light-hearted point of touching one. He also commented on how they had a novel value when first installed:

> Jim: *"At first it was ooh, it was quite a 'ooh look at these, aren't these nice'."*
>
> RW: *"Yeah?"*
>
> Jim: *"Well yeah, it's different isn't it."*

For Jim, the experience of having a windfarm nearby was a novelty and enabled him to directly experience the turbines in a way that is not possible through simply looking at them from afar or seeing pictures of them. The embodied experiences of landscape discussed in 6.6 thus emerge as a potential experiential factor that can bring personal meaning to windfarms as part of place.

The presence of experiences, memories and personal associations related to the windfarms is, however, something that usually takes time to build up. The increased acceptance of non-'natural' structures such as windfarms into constructions of place identity over time may thus be facilitated by the accrual of such positive personal experiences. The temporal element of people's experiences of windfarms (the 'time' arrow in Fig. 9.1) is, therefore, an important one to consider; as 10.3.3 and 10.3.4 below explore.

10.3.3 Windfarms as pre-existing or new additions to place: An influencing factor?

In the case of existing windfarms, their age means that, whilst for some they pose a change to a remembered pre-windfarm landscape, for others they have always formed part of their place-experience. Attitudes towards existing windfarms might, therefore, be expected to relate to people's time-dependent experiences of the landscape that has been changed (particularly within a disruption-to-place explanatory framework; see 2.3). This suggestion was put forward by one Mullion interviewee, Peter, who (although objecting to all windfarms) recognised that his particular view of Goonhilly Windfarm is affected by his personal experience of the place (i.e. that it is situated and relational). It is, in part, shaped from his memory of how the place looked when he first arrived in the area forty-three years ago:

> *"But whether, if somebody arrived on site and these were already existent, would they feel the same about it as I did having arrived on site before their existence, is probably a different question… Does [the teenage girl] next door feel the same about it? Goes back to the point I made earlier - I've driven along that road with nothing at the end of it, she's never been driven along the road when it hasn't been there. She doesn't know any differently. Once upon a time when you drove that way, oddly enough of course, with Goonhilly slightly right to centre of the dishes, I didn't find them at all offensive. How very peculiar. But then that's what was always there when I drove along the road"* (Peter, Mullion).

Picking up on Peter's point, only two of the interviewees who actively disliked their local windfarm arrived in the area after it was constructed. The rest were a mixture of lifelong residents and longer-term 'incomers' who had already built up a relationship and conceptualisation of the place before the windfarm was introduced - and this may add to their perception of it as incongruent with the surrounding landscape to which they had become attached.

Peter's speculation that the windfarm may be more acceptable for younger or newer residents, who 'don't know any differently', did appear to hold some truth. There was some evidence that the windfarm is taken for granted by many of those for whom it has

always been a feature of their everyday landscape. For instance, Dawn and her daughter, Briony, moved to Martham eighteen years ago (after the windfarm was built), but their struggle to remember whether or not the windfarm existed then indicates that it was not a significant factor when moving to the area:

> Dawn: *"Now,* (calling to Briony in the next room), *the windfarm, that was put up since we came here wasn't it?"*
>
> Briony: "*Erm, I think so. I can't remember."*
>
> Dawn: "*I really can't remember. The one up Collis Lane."*
>
> Briony: "*Yeah, when I was about Susie's age Milly took us there didn't she?"*
>
> Dawn: "*Yeah, you were about five then."*
>
> Briony: "*They were here then."*
>
> Dawn: "*You know, I really can't remember whether they were here or not."*

Ethel and her granddaughter, Cassie, are both lifelong residents of Askam but, being only five years old at the time of its construction, Cassie does not recall ever having known the place without the windfarm:

> Cassie: "*[The wind turbines] don't bother me really."*
>
> RW: *"Have they always been there for you?"*
>
> Cassie: "*I don't know, Gran, have they? I've always known them to be there."*
>
> Ethel: "*No. They've been built in the last what, last ten years?"*
>
> Cassie: "*Have they? Oh."*
>
> Ethel: "*Probably less."*

It is interesting that Ethel, who herself dislikes the windfarm, perceives it as being newer than it actually is (fourteen years), whereas Cassie cannot remember a time when it was not there. Perhaps due to Ethel disliking the turbines, their arrival in the landscape is more at the forefront of her mind. 'Having always known' the windfarm thus emerges as an element in some people's ambivalence or unconscious recognition

of it, and this perhaps reduces the likelihood of such people holding strongly negative opinions.

However, residence prior/since the windfarm's arrival is clearly not a singular determining factor, as many lifelong and longer-term residents do not object to the windfarm despite their prior memories and experiences. Those participants who were ambivalent about the windfarm included a mix of lifelong residents and incomers, both old and new, who all felt (from a personal point of view) that the local windfarm is a benign and unremarkable part of the place. This suggests that the age of the windfarms has allowed place attachments to be re-formed and adjusted in order to accommodate the presence of the windfarm, but it may also indicate that windfarms pose less of a threat to place attachment – even at their proposal/construction phase - than is sometimes portrayed within the energy literature (see 2.4).

The lack of pattern between incomer/local and dislike/support also points to weaknesses in depictions of incomers as idyll-seekers who are more likely to object to windfarms than 'grounded locals' who are more dependent on the local economy (see Hoppe-Kilpper & Steinhauser, 2002; Short, 2002; van der Horst, 2007; Woods, 2003b). Personal and social backgrounds do have an influence over attitudes (and people's power to resist unwanted developments, see Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Marsden et al., 1993), but differences in attitudes cannot be presented as a simplistic rural/urban or local/in-migrant divide. As earlier chapters have shown, both lifelong residents and newcomers are able to recognise the evolving nature of place and to evaluate change according to its perceived impact on particularly valued aspects of place (whether these are social or material). Thus, whilst prior experience of a rural place may have some influence over attitudes towards new non-'natural' structures, other factors appear to hold more weight.

10.3.4 'Fading into the background': Opinion-change over time?

The majority of ambivalent interviewees did not recall having particularly objected to the windfarm at the time of its proposal and construction. However, some admitted that they had originally disliked (though not necessarily actively objected to) the windfarm but had grown used to it over time:

> *"I don't think it's had that much effect. It's one of those things though isn't it, when you see it there at first you think 'oh crikey' and then you almost don't notice it in the end after a matter of months"* (Caroline, Mullion).

> *"Don't even notice it. Don't even know it's there. So we're used to it. I don't like it, but it don't bother me it's there"* (Adam, Martham).

> *"We're not conscious of them now to be honest. But to begin with they were a monstrosity stuck up there, you know, and nobody liked them"* (Bob, Askam).

In their discussions about how the windfarms have become familiar parts of the landscape, several participants made comparisons between the wind turbines and electricity pylons (as Simon and Naomi did; see Box 8.2). Some portrayed pylons as having become unremarkable and largely uncontroversial aspects of the everyday landscape and suggested that, over time, the wind turbines will come to be viewed in a similar manner. For instance:

Plate 10.2: A turbine and electricity pylon at Far Old Park Windfarm, Askam

> Belinda: "*And it's like, years ago when pylons, when electric first came in, people complained about the pylons."*

> John: "Yeah, *I remember when they were doing the pylons it was 'oh, crikey what an eyesore' but you're used to them now, you don't give them no notice do you. They're part of your life. You don't see them."*

> Belinda: "*Yeah. So it's the same with the windfarms and that. I don't think you'll notice them after a bit."*
>
> (Belinda and John, Askam).

Whilst this conceptual blindness to electricity pylons on an everyday basis was perceived to be relatively universal, it must be recognised that this remains highly subjective, as two other participants revealed their continued dislike of pylons:

> *"And you mentioned dear old Scotland which, years ago, was absolutely beautiful, but you probably know as well as I do, if you turn your head sideways you're going to see a line of pylons gone 'blatt' across some of the most beautiful countryside in the world"* (Peter, Mullion).

> *"Now the thing that I don't like are the electricity pylons. They march like giants across the scenery, and all the wires and, horrible things, and nobody seems to say anything about them. They're perfectly alright apparently"* (Philippa, Mullion).

Like windfarms, the installation of overhead high-voltage power lines can be locally controversial (Batel et al., 2013; Devine-Wright & Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright, 2013a), highlighting that opinions to other established structures remain similarly divided. Interestingly, though, individuals sharing the same opinions on pylons do not necessarily share opinions on windfarms. Whilst Peter also dislikes the aesthetics of the local windfarm, Philippa actively likes it. Perceptions of non-'natural' structures in rural landscapes are thereby revealed as specific, subjective and influenced by multiple factors; as Fig. 9.1 attempts to convey.

Notwithstanding the exceptions of Peter and Philippa, the comparison made between wind turbines and pylons is interesting for its allusion to the belief that local protest arises partly from a general resistance to, or dislike of, change and will thus fade over time. Some participants displayed a particularly considered opinion on the process through which changes become incorporated into people's background lives:

> *"I think [the windfarm]'s in the background now. Unless you're really close to it…So in most cases it's peripheral, it's in the background. It's the story isn't it, that people dislike change for change's sake. And as they go forward, as*

> *they understand what it is, how remote it is to them, it has less impact. So in general terms it's there, it doesn't bother me, it doesn't impact me"* (Richard, Askam).

> *"People don't like new things and they don't like change. That's the thing. But once that settles down, you know. I mean I always remember when they started to build the Somerton [windfarm] there was great big lorries all coming through with these huge great mast things that people were complaining about* (laughs)*. But once they get used to it they just don't think any more about it"* (Dee, Martham).

As Richard articulated, whilst there is a general assumption that people do not like change, these feelings can alter if it becomes apparent that the change has less impact than expected. These findings could, therefore, be construed as reflecting those of previous studies, which found that attitudes towards renewable energy sites follow a U-shaped curve, where initial support drops at the planning stage when concerns are aroused regarding negative impacts, but increases again once the site has been established and negative impacts are less than feared (Wolsink, 1994). Such studies explain differences between attitudes towards operational and proposed windfarms as resulting from an increased acceptance over time as perceived risks do not materialise (and as resignation sets in) (Eltham et al., 2008; Firestone et al., 2009; Pasqualetti, 2011; van der Horst, 2007; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 1989; Wolsink, 2007a). However, although some of my interviewees who were not keen on, but now tolerate, the windfarm were originally active opponents, the majority of interviewees did not recall any significant change in their opinion.

Since this study is not a longitudinal one, the findings rely on participants' stated recollections about their feelings at the time of the windfarm's proposal and can only be relatively inconclusive regarding evidence of opinion-change. Nevertheless, I would question the extent to which the U-shaped curve is applicable for describing individual opinions over time because ambivalent (and perhaps generally positive) attitudes are likely to be under-represented by most surveys if these people do not feel the need to express their opinion. Additionally, protest groups often have high levels of social

capital and can have powerful voices within windfarm (and other) debates, thereby obscuring the presence of more ambivalent (or supportive) opinions (Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Eltham et al., 2008; Haggett & Toke, 2006; Marsden et al., 1993; Putnam, 2000; van der Horst & Toke, 2010). This potential respondent bias and prominence of oppositional arguments explains, in part, why most of the literature regarding attitudes to renewable energy tends to focus on explaining objections to windfarms, rather than considering ambivalent or positive opinions in any depth (Devine-Wright, 2011c; Ellis et al., 2007). A focus on existing windfarms, and on 'experiential factors' as one of a variety of influencers, has helped to highlight and understand this wider range of opinions.

10.4 Assessments of utility, costs and benefits

Chapter Seven showed that opinions about housing developments in the case studies were not formed purely on the basis of emotive responses or selfish motivations. They often included an explicitly rational consideration of costs and benefits to the community. Similarly, the discussions in Chapter Eight revealed attitudes towards non-'natural' structures such as GES, nuclear power stations, and mining remnants to be partly based on an evaluation of their usefulness. Such assessments of utility – particularly related to perceptions of environmental and economic efficiency - also emerged as an important factor shaping opinions about the windfarms, underscoring the relevance of this element of Fig. 9.1 in explaining attitudes to change.

10.4.1 Evaluation of worth: Subsidies, environmental benefit and (in)efficiency

The most frequently expressed criticism of, or concern about, the windfarms was their level of efficiency, with those who strongly disliked them believing them to be so inefficient that their usefulness and environmental benefit is minimal and not, therefore, worth the negative visual impact created. The amount of government subsidies

supporting wind energy was often cited as evidence of this inefficiency and lack of value. For example:

> *"It's absolutely disgusting what they've done with the land, for very little value. I mean you look at it now, there's only one of them turning. And we get a lot of strong winds here - you get strong winds and they can't operate because they can't deal with it"* (Mick, Askam).

> *"In my mind they can have as many windfarms if they want if they're not subsidised. Because if they weren't subsidised they wouldn't be there. Because they're not cost-effective. I mean, they've put all these windfarms up and if the wind isn't blowing a certain strength they can't turn the blades. And if it's above a certain strength they have to stop them anyway because it's going to rip the motors apart. So they've only a set window when they can actually operate. And even when they're operating, you look up there - there's seven just above us - of those seven, nine times out of ten you're lucky if you see three moving. But most of the time you won't even see one moving"* (Trevor, Askam).

Even for those participants who did not personally mind the windfarms and were generally tolerant of their presence, their cost-effectiveness and worthwhileness in terms of contributing to energy security and clean energy were cited as key concerns:

> *"I'm not too upset about them…My concern is that they're very inefficient for the amount of money spent and the amount of blotting the landscape. Erm, I'm not passionately against them"* (Lynette, Mullion).

> *"I'm not against them, you know, fine. But I feel you need a mix. You can't rely on them…But no, I'm quite happy with them. But I do feel that the powers that be are putting far too much resource, because I don't think they will ever pay their way. I think they will be there and they will generate, yes, but I don't think that they will ever become that efficient"* (Angus, Martham).

> *"They don't bother me a lot but then again somebody tells me about the economics of it, how subsidised it is"* (James, Askam).

These participants portrayed a sense of resentment that public money is being spent on something they see as having little value and negative impacts. As can be seen in the above quotes, several participants also commented on the windfarm's operational intermittency. For those opposing or sceptical of windfarm's efficiency, the experience of living close to one can serve to underline these concerns if they witness periods of inactivity first-hand. Thus, although personal experience of living with a windfarm can

result in ambivalence about it, time and familiarity do not necessarily change the opinion of those with stronger negative perceptions and can even strengthen it. Hence, as Haggett (2011) argues, familiarity does not necessarily lead to reduced opposition to further windfarms; particularly as the additional issue of cumulative impacts can also uphold or deepen objections (see 10.5.1). Thus, whilst the 'time' arrow in Fig. 9.1 suggests opinions may shift over time towards a more positive position, this process is not guaranteed; particularly if some elements (e.g. assessments of utility) are heavily weighted towards negativity.

Plate 10.3: Far Old Park Windfarm, with one turbine down for maintenance

In contrast to those sceptical of the windfarms' efficiency, for others, a belief in the environmental and energy-security value of windfarms led to them accepting its presence despite personally disliking it on the grounds of aesthetics or noise nuisance. This demonstrates how positive 'assessments of utility' can counteract the negative effect of other elements in Fig. 9.1. For instance, Jim and William do not *like* the windfarm, but their acknowledgement of the need for new forms of energy limits their opposition to it:

> *"If truth be known, I'd rather not have them…But I'd rather have my electric lights and my computer. I can see the pros and cons"* (Jim, Askam).

> *"Well, my personal opinion was that I wasn't keen on them. But, on the other hand, I do understand things can't carry on as they are. But I really don't know what the answer to it is; I'm not saying that they are. I suppose they're a help along the way"* (William, Askam).

Individual emotive opinions are thereby balanced by a consideration of the windfarm's contribution to the needs of society. This is, however, easier to conclude for those not

directly affected than for those who live in very close proximity to the turbines, as Alice acknowledged:

> *"I don't mind them. They're there for a reason, because we're running out of energy and that's another way of using, you know, it's free in effect isn't it… You can understand, if it was within your sight or on your neighbouring property you can probably understand why people complain about them. But I'm of the opinion that we need to do something because one day you'll go to turn the light on and there won't be anything there"* (Alice, Askam).

These views express a sense of tolerance given the weighing up of pros and cons. Note, though, that this tolerance does not equate to support; the windfarm may be passively 'accepted' and no longer actively campaigned against, but it is not necessarily welcomed (see also Box 10.3). As Batel et al. (2013) caution, acceptance and support are not equivalent.

The views presented here are also indicative of how (as discussed in 6.5 regarding the loss of Martham's old primary school) emotional attachments to place do not preclude conscious, rationalised thinking influencing people's response to change and should not, therefore, automatically be associated with resistant attitudes or actions. In reality, attitudes towards windfarms and other place-changes are multiple and complex, with many individuals holding a mix of contradictory and conflicting opinions. Attempts to label people as either supports or opponents can, therefore, be inaccurate or futile.

10.4.2 Rationalised acceptance: Consideration of alternatives

In some instances, participants' assessments of the windfarms' value were based on a consideration of alternative forms of energy production. Their attitude towards the windfarm was distinctly relational to other potential non-'natural' structures in the landscape. Most notably, comparisons were frequently made with nuclear power stations:

> *"I think [windfarms] are a great idea. I think there should be a lot more of them. Like abroad, in Holland and what have you, they're everywhere. I*

think I'd rather see them than a nuclear power station…I'd rather see two, three hundred of them than I would nuclear power station" (Duncan, Martham).

"I was actually on the parish council at the time, and we had to hold a public meeting about the windfarm, you know, you had the objectors. But, well I couldn't see that they were any problem. And all I could see was, well, would you rather have a windfarm there or a nuclear power station? A nuclear power station you're leaving a legacy for future generations, whether in fifteen-hundred years' time, whereas a windfarm, if in twenty years' time they can see a cheaper way of making electricity they can just take them down. They've gone, that's it" (Bill, Mullion).

"Well, the only thing that has changed is the windmills. But I'd rather see them than a nuclear power plant on me backdoor. But being a keen photographer, it does spoil the view. It really does" (Jim, Askam).

As these quotes reveal, the preference for wind power over nuclear power was, for some, such as Duncan, a key reason to endorse the windfarm. Others, such as Jim, however, perceived the windfarm to be the lesser of two evils in this regard – the nuclear comparison serves to mitigate his opposition but does not necessarily equate to support.

On the other hand, some of those disliking or sceptical of the windfarm suggested that other types of renewable energy – particularly wave and tidal technologies - held more promise than windfarms due to their (perceived) greater efficiency and/or lesser visual impact. Such opinions particularly emerged in Askam, where there have been suggestions of building a tidal barrage across the Duddon estuary, and in Mullion, where the nearby Wave Hub (an experimental wave technology site at Hale, Cornwall) is relatively well known. For instance:

"To me, a better option would be wave power. It's less obtrusive, and I believe from studies that they're doing in Scotland, it's a lot more efficient…And we've got a perfect estuary for it… a tidal boom across here (points to the Duddon estuary) *would be, well it wouldn't affect anyone"* (Mick, Askam).

"I think there are alternatives. I think there's mileage in wave energy because there is a consistency there that's not in the air. Every day the tide

goes in and out. So there's potential movement there, every tide, so it rises one or the other" (Peter, Mullion).

Assessments of utility (both positive and negative) are, therefore, partly made in reference to potential alternatives. This again highlights the 'rational' thought processes involved in determining people's attitudes towards windfarms, as well as the relational construction of these perceptions.

10.4.3 Relationships between value assessments and aesthetic evaluations

10.2.3 showed that, in contrast to perceptions of windfarms as 'eyesores', several participants saw beauty in the wind turbines' form. For some participants (e.g. Justin; see Box 10.3), these aesthetic judgements were not particularly related to other evaluations of the windfarm's worth, as they did not feel they had enough knowledge to comment on its economic or environmental value. However, like Roz (see Box 10.1), many participants who liked the look of the windfarms also believed they made a positive contribution to society and/or the environment. For instance:

> *"I think they're quite jolly really. And I think you, um, if you're talking about renewable energy, it's the way to go really. It's certainly preferable to horrible power stations, isn't it? And everybody wants electricity. Nobody says I don't like windfarms and I'm prepared to do without electricity, do they?"* (Sally, Mullion).

> *"When my mother was alive, she could see them from her bed and she thought they were quite pleasant. I don't see them as a blot on the landscape like that really. I know some people do but, er. well they're doing something useful, they're generating power"* (Bill, Mullion).

Perception of the windfarm's aesthetic beauty is thus related to, and perhaps dependent upon, wider cultural discourses and personal values that associate the windfarm with a positive environmental or technological innovation. In a similar way, most people who disliked the windfarms' aesthetics evaluated their practical merit negatively. This was particularly notable in Peter's account, when he talked about the differences between GES and the windfarm. As shown in 8.4.1, Peter values the

presence of GES because he perceives it as a symbol of cultural heritage due to its technological innovativeness and positive socio-economic and environmental contributions to the area (both past and present). However, Peter considers these positive characteristics to be distinctly lacking in the case of windfarms – which he believes to be unattractive and inefficient (and thus not worth the visual impact):

> *"You look out there today and the bloomin' things aren't even turning. The people who make money out of it, however, are a different kettle of fish altogether. The guys who are the technologists who can design and produce these things, with subsidies from another agency, have done very well from it. But to produce those takes some other power source. Does it return it? Pprh. I couldn't argue with that because I don't know the answer to that but I suspect it doesn't. I do know that their efficiency is minimal. I do know that they're unlikely in the long term to produce anything like the sort of levels of power that they're supposed to achieve…If I thought they were efficient I could probably persuade myself that they were a necessary evil. Er, would I mind it? In some areas of outlook and expanse, erm, yeah I probably might resent that"* (Peter, Mullion).

Unlike GES (which is more widely considered to be attractive due to its association with technological innovation, 'progress' and heritage), aesthetic beauty in the case of windfarms is particularly dependent on whether the individual views them as serving a useful function or as inefficient and a useless 'blot on the landscape'. This highlights how aesthetics are ideological (Duncan & Duncan, 2004). As Hoppe-Kilpper and Steinhauser (2002, p.92) comment with reference to public support for the construction of German highways in the 1960s and 70s, "clearly, the perception of beauty and of beautiful scenery is influenced by society's social and economic visions…when one is convinced or even enthusiastic about something, one does not merely tolerate it, but can find it beautiful".

The discussions here indicate that there is an important relationship between practical evaluations of windfarms (i.e. 'assessments of utility') and aesthetic judgements, which are, in the context of rural landscapes, linked to discursive interpretations of beauty and 'nature' (i.e. 'discursive interpretations'). It is, however, difficult to ascertain the causal relationship between these two factors, as it remains unclear whether claims of

in/efficiency are used to justify aesthetic aversion/appreciation, or whether it is the aesthetic aversion/appreciation that leaves people more open to accepting such claims. The relationship is likely to be a dialectical, rather than a causal, one. Regardless, a belief in the usefulness and effectiveness of windfarms as a relatively new technology has emerged here as integral to the ease with which they are incorporated into people's conceptualisation of a healthy, productive and valued rural landscape.

10.5 Local contexts and integration into shared place-meanings

The discussions about GES, Askam's mining remnants and Mullion Harbour in Chapter Eight showed that these old non-'natural' structures had come to be positively associated with their villages due to their role in social memories and practices (an integral part of rural place experience, as discussed in Chapter Seven). The local contexts in which these structures are positioned were, therefore, fundamental in shaping residents' (largely positive) opinions of them. The importance of local contexts also emerged from discussions about the windfarms and is particularly relevant in explaining the subtle, but pertinent, differences between attitudes in the three case studies. A focus on this element of Fig. 9.1 suggests that the influence of particular local contexts has the ability, in some cases, to override – or at least partly counteract – other elements in the framework.

10.5.1 Scepticism in Askam and Ireleth

Notably more negativity towards the windfarms was found in Askam than in either Martham or Mullion. Seven of the eleven people who actively disliked their local windfarm were from Askam, and a large proportion of the remaining Askam interviewees displayed some level of scepticism or resignation towards the windfarm. Much of this scepticism was linked to concerns about inefficiency and inactivity due to

poor-siting, noise impacts, cumulative impacts, and visual impacts. A focus on local contexts revealed a number of possible reasons why these concerns were particularly apparent in Askam. These were: the younger age of the windfarm; the presence of an active anti-windfarm group; the cumulative impact of multiple windfarms in the area; and the siting of the turbines in relation to the specific landscape-type. These suppositions derive from the interview findings, local media reviews, and personal observations, but were not necessarily explicitly referred to by interviewees.

First, the Far Old Park windfarm is slightly younger than those near Mullion and Martham. The Goonhilly and Blood Hill windfarms were two of the first in the country and, although not without controversy, escaped the type of large scale protest now associated with windfarms due, in part, to their attraction as an innovative novelty. Although only seven and eight years younger than the Goonhilly and Blood Hill windfarms respectively, initial opinions Far Old Park may have been more influenced by national debates about windfarms propagated by the media and anti-windfarm campaign groups such as Country Guardian[26] that had, by then, established a greater presence. Significantly, a local anti-windfarm group, the Marton, Askam and Ireleth Against Windfarms Group (MAIWAG), was established, led by some of the residents living closest to the Far Old Park site. MAIWAG was involved in several court cases (see BBC News, 2004) and petitioned for the removal of the farm, arguing that planning regulations had not been followed and that local residents were being affected by "noise, shadow flicker, visual intrusion, public safety and property devaluation" (MAIWAG 2004). Noise was a particular issue. In a 'proof of evidence' letter titled 'My experience of living with a windfarm', sent to South Lakeland District Council in relation to another proposed windfarm, one Askam resident and protester described the noise as follows:

[26] Country Guardian is a national umbrella-organisation for anti-windfarm groups in the UK, established in 1990.

> *"The turbines can thump incessantly for days and nights on end. One house cannot even see any of the 7 turbines but the residents had to leave their premises, in a desperate attempt to gain some respite from the incessant noise that kept them awake, made them ill, and stopped them enjoying their house and gardens. In other cases, residents were obliged to attempt sleep by means of playing a radio all night long, in an effort to drown out the noise of the turbines or play "musical bedrooms", changing from one room to another, sometimes several times, during the night, in a vain attempt to gain some relief from the noise from the turbines. The noise of the turbines has been variously described as "a clog in a tumble-drier", "a train continually passing though the room", "a c130 Hercules flying outside your window", "distant pile driving", and "someone mixing concrete in the sky""* (Brierley, 2009, p.3).

The language used to describe the noise of the windfarm distinctly refers to industrial machines that are antagonistic to the idyllic 'peace and quiet' often associated with rural areas (including by interviewees). Windfarms are thereby depicted as conflicting with the rural soundscape as well as the visual landscape, highlighting the multi-sensory nature of both discourse and experience (and the interrelatedness between discursive interpretations and experiential factors).

Whilst the controversy in Askam has now died down and the windfarm has become, for many, a familiar feature of the landscape (see 10.3.1), these debates are likely to still have an influence over attitudes today, as people are more conscious of questions about noise, efficiency, inactivity and other local impacts. Indeed, even Askam interviewees who were relatively ambivalent about the windfarm spoke about the problems those living closest to it have experienced. For instance, noise was an issue particularly discussed and, although a noise reduction system was put in place in 2001 following high initial complaints, some people remain concerned about this matter – not (for most) from a personal point of view, but out of sympathy with residents living closest to the windfarm:

> *"Well I didn't mind them really, but then I'm not living next to them. We've been walking up there and they're monsters when you get up next to them. And they hum. And apparently people that live close to them, it sort of penetrates their breath in their sleep and it really does, you know, get people down"* (Jane, Askam).

Although Jane has been up to the windfarm and heard its "hum" herself, much of her concern about the noise impacts is based on anecdotal evidence. She went on to say: "*I mean I don't know because I'm not living up there, but it reminds me of being out in a sailing ship. You know, with the sails. It's the wind noises" (my emphasis).* Whilst Jane does not refer to MAIWAG, it is possible that her awareness of problems partly stems from their vigorous campaigning, as they had a strong presence in the local area, communicating their concerns about the noise issue through local media. Scepticism about the windfarm's inefficiency and periods of inactivity appears to be similarly embedded in local discourse. Thus, in Askam's case, the windfarm has accrued negative social meanings, and this local context has exacerbated negative perceptions related to experiential factors and assessments of utility.

As noted in 4.3.3, Cumbria has a relatively high number of wind turbines and several of these are visible from Askam (see Fig. 4.4). Standing by Far Old Park Windfarm, the Haverigg windfarms across the estuary at Millom, along with the Ormonde and Walney offshore windfarms at Barrow (see Plate 10.4), are all within sight. The Harlock Hill and Kirkby Moor windfarms are also within three miles of Askam. Some Askam residents, therefore, whilst not necessarily objecting to the Far Old Park site in particular, felt that Askam is becoming 'surrounded' by wind turbines. In comparison, whilst Cornwall and Norfolk also have a number of windfarms, they are not particularly focused around, or visible from, the Mullion and Martham areas. The perceived 'presence' of windfarms is, therefore, greater in Askam and some residents (even some who generally support windfarms) are concerned about whether further wind energy development will be limited:

> *"I can see the need for them to be there. My only concern - and I think this has probably happened already and if it hasn't it's going to - is that the area is going to be surrounded by them"* (Lisa, Askam).

> *"And you look over at Haverigg as well, right across the waters, you might not be able to see it today, but they've got quite a few on their shoreline. They're just present… Where do you stop? How many of these do we*

need? You know, are we just going to be full of them? Or are we just going to stick to this?" (Jim, Askam).

It is reasonable to infer, then, that landscape developments which change local vistas can be accommodated by people with deep attachments to the place, but only if they do not overwhelm the landscape to the point where its character is fundamentally changed. Thus, even those who support wind energy are cautious about the area being "surrounded" and "full" of turbines. Perceptions of windfarms' suitability are, therefore, highly relative to (and acceptance dependent upon) 'local contexts', as the presence of existing developments may increase negative experiential factors (e.g. visual or noise impacts) and/or exacerbate perceptions of them as incongruent with the place's rural character, making it more difficult to incorporate them into positive constructions of place identity and attachment.

Plate 10.4: View from Far Old Park Windfarm showing Barrow's offshore turbines on the horizon

Linked to cumulative impacts is a sense among some Askam residents that they already have their 'fair share' of energy-related technologies - or, by implication, 'intrusions' - in the area. As well as windfarms, the West Cumbrian coast is host to the

Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant and a major gasworks at Barrow, and is currently being branded as 'Britain's Energy Coast'. Whilst, on the one hand, windfarms can be aligned with energy production (and thus potentially seen as congruent with Askam's local context), their proliferation can, on the other hand, also be perceived as over-exploiting a 'naturally' beautiful area for the benefit of the rest of the country. For example:

> *"I don't mind them offshore. But I'm not so keen on the ones that are springing up, the individual ones on pieces of farmland, dotted all over the place…And I do think around here we're doing our bit, with the energy coast. And I'm not sure the little ones are bringing much. I mean I don't disagree, I know we need them...And I mean we've got Windscales[27] up the road there that's pumping out stuff, so I think we do enough for the energy of this country* (laughs). *We've got the gas, we've got the power station, we've got wind turbines, that's enough! Let somebody else have a go"* (Jean, Askam).

This emphasis on distributional justice highlights the impact of political factors (which run throughout the elements identified in Fig. 9.1) on the processes shaping attitudes to change. This political element was further epitomised in the way that some residents felt they are having to endure the negative impacts of energy production so that power-holders (politicians and wealthy shareholders) do not have to:

> *"I mean all these people that get it approved are people who say, oh yeah build them there, because they don't want them in their backyards. All the politicians – 'yeah, sling them up Cumbria. We don't want them, keep them up there'"* (Trevor, Askam).

> *"I mean they've got a situation at Harlock Hill, where there's five wind turbines they're wanting to make them bigger. And there's a bit of a conflict about them and it's taken a long time to go to planning. And three hundred people have written letters in support of them, but these three hundred people are shareholders in the company. They don't live here, they live in London. I think the nearest person is Lancaster…I mean they've got a vested interest, they're shareholders. But they don't have to look at them, they don't have to live with them because they live in London. And that's a bit unfair for the people that live around Harlock Hill. Because they're going to have a ninety-nine-metre wind turbine like half a mile from their house"* (Jean, Askam).

[27] Windscales is the site of a nuclear reactor (now being decommissioned); part of the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant.

Studies of public attitudes to renewable energy installations at the planning phase have found distributional justice to be a key factor shaping support at the planning stage (Devine-Wright, 2005; Haggett, 2011). However, van der Horst (2007) has suggested that the presence of existing windfarms results in less opposition to new projects due to processes of familiarity. My findings indicate that, although a large degree of familiarity and 'acceptance' was apparent, perceptions of distributional justice continue to hold sway for several Askam residents due to the high number of windfarms in the area.

The final place-specific factor that accounts for the greater negativity of opinions in Askam compared to Martham and Mullion is the particular siting of Far Old Park Windfarm in relation to the area's landscape character. The windfarm is slightly closer to the village than in the other case studies (see Table 4.1), but, perhaps more significantly, it *appears* even closer due to the shape of the landscape. As Plate 10.5 depicts, Askam lies at the foot of a steep hill (and Ireleth continues almost to the top of this hill) on which Far Old Park Windfarm is situated. The hill is also relatively featureless (both in terms of 'natural' and human features). This gives the turbines a particular prominence and results in them being visible from most vantage points in and around the village. The height and steepness of the hill also makes it easy to understand why some people feel that the windfarm over-bears the village. Some residents spoke about feeling that, whilst other windfarms have a more subtle presence, Far Old Park is particularly intrusive:

> *"Nah, to be honest I don't notice them much, the ones offshore. I notice those up there because they're in your face. I look out the bedroom window and they're there"* (Jean, Askam).

> *"There's some along at Kirkby, well they're up on the moor, they're not in your face like ours"* (Ethel, Askam).

Plate 10.5: Far Old Park Windfarm with Askam in the foreground

The siting of the windfarm is, therefore, quite different to in Martham and Mullion. Goonhilly Windfarm, whilst sited atop Goonhilly Downs (which also has a more gradual incline than Ireleth hill) is sufficiently far enough away from Mullion for it not to be particularly noticeable (see 10.5.2). The broadly flat landscape within which Blood Hill Windfarm is sited, on the other hand, means that, whilst very near to the edge of Martham, its visual presence is not particularly prominent from most of the village.

The importance of siting windfarms in a manner that is mindful of the surroundings and sensitive to local landscape values is well-established within the renewable energy literature (Nadai & Labussiere, 2013; Wolsink, 2007a; 2010). My findings reassert these arguments by demonstrating that windfarm siting, whilst perhaps not able to sway the opinions of those with particularly strong feelings (either positive or negative), can influence the perceptions of the more ambivalent or undecided. The combination of the alteration to a particularly valued view and the feeling of Far Old Park Windfarm over-bearing Askam (as well as the noise issues associated with proximity and the issue of cumulative impacts) have contributed to a greater sense of scepticism, injustice and place-intrusion among residents in Askam than in Martham or Mullion.

Thus, although the 'appropriateness' of a particular site is to some extent subjective, the shared meanings attributed to places and landscapes (i.e. local contexts) may lead to a degree of consensus about which areas are un/suitable. The multitude of factors shaping attitudes towards windfarms (Devine-Wright, 2005; Graham et al., 2009) means that 'appropriate' siting will not necessarily make a difference to some people, but for others it may be the difference between not noticing the windfarm on a daily basis (and therefore accommodating it into their sense of place) and seeing at as an unwelcome intrusion on the place.

10.5.2 Ambivalence and conditional support in Mullion

Opinions about the windfarm in Mullion were notably ambivalent in many instances. Although the windfarm was mentioned once or twice in passing (as a reference to other things being discussed), not one Mullion participant raised it as a point for discussion without being prompted. Once the topic was raised, many participants gave only cursory responses to my questions and moved the conversation on to something else. It simply did not appear to be a subject that aroused much interest or emotion, as it did not have any significant impact or presence in their everyday lives or conceptualisation of Mullion as a place (i.e. it was not perceived as affecting 'experiential factors' or as conflicting with place meanings/'local contexts'). In fact, two residents, Jill and Melanie, did not consciously acknowledge the windfarm at all and had to be reminded of its existence:

> Melanie: "We haven't got any wind turbines in Mullion yet, but there might be."
>
> RW: *"There's the one up on Goonhilly though, isn't there."*
>
> Melanie: Oh yeah. Well they've been, um, that's been there for a long time now."
>
> RW: *"Do they bother you at all?"*
>
> Melanie: "*No, no, not at all."*

Plate 10.6: View of Goonhilly Windfarm from the edge of Mullion

Jill: *"Where is the windfarm?"*

Polly (Jill's mum): *"It's um, Goonhilly isn't it? Goonhilly."*

Jill: *"Now see I'm all for that, doesn't bother me."*

Although I suggest that this lack of acknowledgement is partly due to the windfarm's longstanding, familiar presence in the landscape (as Melanie says, it has "been there for a long time now"), it may also be influenced by the relative detachment of the windfarm from the village and its particular interaction with the landscape character. Whilst opinions about the windfarm appeared to be generally ambivalent or positive in Mullion, it was notable that several participants qualified their acceptance of it. Their support (or at least absence of objection) regarding the windfarm emerged as distinctly conditional upon its particular siting. Proximity to the village, landscape character and existing land-use all emerged as siting-related factors that contributed to the qualified acceptance of the windfarm. The specificities of the project as not significantly altering the social and personal meanings associated with place (i.e. local contexts and experiential factors) may have thus mitigated or 'watered-down' the effect of other elements in Fig. 9.1's framework, as discussed further below.

The Goonhilly windfarm lies slightly further from the village than the other two case studies (see Table 2.1) and, therefore, arguably has less 'presence' in Mullion itself. Additionally, the lie of the land means that the windfarm is less prominent, as the landscape between Mullion and Goonhilly consists of gently rolling hills that obscure the windfarm from certain vantage points. The western side of the village is particularly shielded from the windfarm because it slopes gently down towards the coast. Its inland position also means that it does not encroach on experiences of the coastal landscape or on the views that are typically depicted in visual representations of Mullion. Furthermore, the windfarm is distanced from the 'community' activities and sites that are, for the most part, situated within the village centre or Mullion Cove, as it neither affects these nor is visibly present within/from them. As such, it does not impact upon Mullion's social relations and sense of community, which, as Chapter Six showed, form a significant part of participants' place attachment. These observations are partly my own, but interviewee accounts suggested similar interpretations. For instance, during our walk through the centre of the village, Philippa talked about how she sees the wind turbines as somewhat removed from, and thus not affecting, the majority of the village:

> *"If we're on the steps [of the chapel] in the morning, on a Sunday morning you can just see them in the distance like that. But other than that, they're not going to bother us here in Mullion are they? Certainly not up here"* (Philippa, Mullion).

My wider interview with Philippa indicated that she viewed the windfarm relatively positively and would not necessarily object to it were it any closer. However, there were other participants who, whilst not specifically objecting to the Goonhilly windfarm, were more explicit about this ambivalence being conditional on its relative removal from the village and valued landscapes/views:

> *"No, the windfarm doesn't worry us. I mean you can see it in the distance, um, it would probably be a different thing if they said they wanted to build one on the skyline here or something. Eeurgh…But of course [Polurrian Bay Hotel] stands out on the skyline [and that's OK]. But I have a feeling windfarms wouldn't go down very well if they were any nearer than those"* (Helen, Mullion).

> *"You mentioned the windfarm. From a personal perspective they don't affect me. Distance is a separator. If closer - and I mean only five or six hundred yards closer - then I might have a different perspective. I think they are nice to look at for a short time, but not a long time"* (Alan, Mullion).

> James: *"They don't really affect us dramatically. They haven't said we're going to plant them [outside our window]."*
>
> Sarah: *"No well that would be awful. I hope that would never happen."*
>
> *James: "…So from a very selfish point of view we hope that windfarms won't come near."*

Whilst such statements might have traditionally been construed as 'NIMBY'-style attitudes, they were not naively made in this regard. Participants displayed an awareness, and acceptance, of their opinions potentially being labelled as such. One participant even described herself in those terms: *"I am one of those Not In My Backyard people"* (Kimberley, Mullion). Andrew also recognised that his own attitude was to some extent contradictory, as he likes the look of the windfarm from a distance but would not want to live nearer to one. For him, this contradiction was something to reflect on as an individual:

> *''As long as it's not in my backyard'. So it's quite interesting, that aspect, because I always like to watch my reaction, why am I reacting in this way, why am I triggered by this"* (Andrew, Mullion).

The use of the term 'NIMBY' is now rightly rejected by the renewable energy literature as pejorative, inaccurate and unhelpful (Devine-Wright, 2005; 2009; McLachlan, 2009; Musall & Kuik, 2011; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 1994). It is thus interesting that local residents, whilst recognising the term's negative connotations, applied this label to themselves. Of course, this may not have been the case had conversations taken place in the context of a proposed windfarm but it is, nevertheless, indicative of how the term is understood by the public (and policymakers and developers – see Devine-Wright, 2011a) and how it remains in common usage, despite academic calls for its abandonment.

Despite some participants' self-identification as 'NIMBYs', to label comments about distance as such would be to ignore the nuances in people's arguments and disregard how perceptions of 'appropriate' siting are usually linked to value judgments assigned to particular landscape types/areas, rather than to a selfish notion about distance from personal dwellings. All participants quoted above showed strong attachment to Mullion's coastal landscape. Since this part of the local landscape emerged (in both local place-representations and personal experiences) as commonly valued for its 'natural' beauty, panoramic seascape and rugged, 'wild' cliff-tops (see 6.4, 6.7 and 8.2), it is unsurprising that there might be particular resistance to the idea of artificial structures such as windfarms being placed there (or, in other words, that such structures might conflict with some 'discursive interpretations', personal meanings/'experiential factors' and specific social place-meanings/'local contexts'). The proximity of a windfarm to these participants' homes should not, therefore, be seen straightforwardly as the determining factor in shaping the above opinions.

This dependence of opinions on site-specific factors was exemplified in the following quote from Jill, a returnee to Mullion who endorses Goonhilly Windfarm, but who would oppose turbines in either Mullion Cove or Cadgwith (a nearby fishing village popular with tourists for its traditional, 'picture-postcard' qualities) on the grounds of aesthetics and potential impact on the tourism economy:

> *"I actually think they're very beautiful, I don't think they're ugly. But I think it has to be closely monitored. I think what we need to be careful about, I know that someone [in Mullion Cove] put in a request to have a wind turbine in their garden, it was denied. And I'm actually for that, because if you can imagine walking down here, which we do draw people in - it's like Cadgwith, everyone loves Cadgwith, but can you imagine if every single person in that village had a wind turbine in their garden, how ugly Cadgwith would look?…But I don't think it's a problem up on Goonhilly where it has those satellite dishes that no-one's complained about for years, so why not stick a load of turbines there?"* (Jill, Mullion).

Jill's reference to the satellite dishes of GES is indicative of a sense among some participants that the windfarm is acceptable in its current location because of the prior

use of the land as a site for non-'natural' structures. Emma also thought that the windfarm's location next to GES somehow made it more acceptable, although she struggled to articulate why:

> "*When they put the new turbines in, they were a lot bigger than the old ones and I was like 'woah'. But I think they're really beautiful and, you know, you've got Goonhilly Earth Station there so really, it's sort of"* (sentence left unfinished) (Emma, Mullion).

These comments could be interpreted as evidence of Goonhilly Downs being perceived as a 'sacrificial lamb' - i.e. it is seen as acceptable to change the look of that particular landscape if it means other, more treasured landscapes are protected from such change[28]. Since GES has been a feature of the Goonhilly landscape for most people's living memory, another technological structure there is not seen to be an issue. Other residents, on the other hand, perceive GES and the windfarms quite differently (as already discussed; see 8.4.1). Social and historical contexts thus emerge as important in influencing local residents' perceptions of windfarms and other non-'natural' structures (as symbolic associations between place and technology also show: see 10.2 and 2.43; Bailey et al., 2011; McLachlan, 2009; Pasqualetti, 2000).

The Goonhilly landscape is also seen by some as more suitable for the windfarm than other areas because of its relative 'emptiness'. With the exceptions of GES and windfarm, the area is largely open moorland that, although important for biodiversity conservation, has relatively few distinguishing 'natural' or human features. Thus Robbie, for example, feels that using this land for wind turbines is sensible:

> *"And it's good to have all this open land, to do something with it rather than just have it sitting there. And if it's creating energy rather than just being a field that's empty it's probably a good thing. I mean I don't know all the ins and outs of things like that but I think if the land's not being used for*

[28] Whilst not necessarily an issue in the Goonhilly case, this notion of some landscapes as sacrificial carries a risk of creating and perpetuating environmental injustices, where areas with existing industry and high levels of socio-economic deprivation are further 'burdened' by unwanted infrastructure such as wind-farms. See van der Horst (2007) and van der Horst and Toke (2010) for a discussion of these political issues.

anything useful and it's not going to affect anyone too much [it's a good thing]" (Robbie, Mullion).

This quote reiterates the discussions in 10.4 (and elsewhere, e.g. 7.4.2; 8.3.1), which have shown that the perceived usefulness, practicality and appropriateness ('assessments of utility') of a structure or land-use is important in determining whether perceptions are positive or negative. Relative support for, or objection to, existing windfarm sites is thus not based simply on its perceived aesthetic quality. It is highly nuanced and can be qualified according to local contexts and site-specific conditions.

10.5.3 Endorsement and ambivalence in Martham: Historical continuity

Opinions about Blood Hill Windfarm were generally positive or ambivalent, with only two participants strongly disliking it. The specific historical context of windmills in the Martham and wider Norfolk area emerged as a particular reason behind this relative support. Although windmills have existed in the area since the late thirteenth century, the majority of the 'mills' for which Norfolk is famous are in fact wind-pumps, introduced by the Dutch in the seventeenth century to drain the low-lying, marshy lands of the Broads. The wind-pumps now have an iconic quality and are frequently used as place-defining symbols of the Norfolk landscape in a wide range of image-based representations, including art, photography and promotional materials for the tourist industry. The romantic charm associated with Dutch windmills (Pasqualetti, 2000) is thus evident in Norfolk too.

Plate 10.7: A traditional wind-pump at Horsey, near Martham

The traditional wind-pumps are seen as an important part of the historic landscape by Martham residents, and several participants made connections between these and the modern wind turbines. The quotes below reveal a perception that the modern turbines

are congruent with the historical context of the county – which, as 7.5 showed, is an important element in people's relationship to place and constructions of place identity.

> *"Well, I love [the windfarm]. I think a part of the Norfolk landscape is it's always had windmills. The wind-pumps. Sort of harping back to it"* (Paddy, Martham).

> *"It don't bother me at all, I think they're fine. We're an area of windmills aren't we really. We've always had them here, so what goes around comes around really"* (Justin, Martham).

> *"There's a history of harnessing wind power"* (Chris, Martham).

> *"I mean I can't see the difference between a turbine and a windmill or wind-pump, it's just part of the landscape up here. There always used to be lots of wind-pumps everywhere. They're derelict now so these turbines are just a progression"* (Anita, Martham).

Participants also conveyed ideas about how attitudes towards artificial structures can change over time and how perceptions of aesthetic beauty are to some extent socially constructed. For instance, Mark suggested that, whilst contemporary responses to rural landscape change are often resistant, he does not think there would have been the same public reaction at the time of the wind-pumps' construction:

> *"People didn't like [the windfarm] very much, they did protest about it…because, again, you're changing the landscape, you're changing things, and you don't want to do that. But when the guys came over from Holland and built all the wind-pumps and put all the dykes in, did they say 'ha, back off, we don't want that, we want it to be left like it is, an estuary'? This is the thing, you've got to, I'm not saying it's right or wrong, but I just think you've got to try these things* (Mark Martham)".

Mary also uses this comparison between the traditional and modern wind turbines to highlight how popular perceptions of what is 'picturesque' change over time and are often dependent on the age – or, specifically, the 'non-modernity' – of a structure (echoing Michael's musings about industry and heritage that were displayed in Box 8.3):

> RW: *"Do you think there is a kind of continuity between the wind-pumps and wind turbines then?"*

> Mary: *"Oh yes. A lot of people don't make the connection, but when you point out to people that the wind-pumps would have been modern at the time then they can start to accept them. Because now the wind-pumps are viewed as really picturesque."*

Perceptions of a non-'natural' structure's aesthetic beauty are perhaps particularly dependent on a structure's age in a rural context, where history and tradition are seen as valued markers of place identity (see 6.3). The drawing of connections between modern windfarms and traditional wind-pumps in Martham also reiterates the findings of Chapter Eight, which showed how perceptions of what counts as 'heritage' can change over time. This reflects arguments in the academic literature that heritage meanings are culturally-specific and continuously changing over time (Harvey, 2001; Orange, 2008). Thus, the notion of windfarms' congruence with the Norfolk landscape is not just about the visual 'fit' with the old wind-pumps (as Devine-Wight, 2011b, found in the case of tidal technology in Northern Ireland; see 2.4.3); it is also about their fit with the cultural history of harnessing wind energy.

The relative acceptance of the wind turbines as a part of Martham's landscape that provide continuity with the past is also apparent in the symbols chosen to represent Martham on the road signs welcoming people into the village. There are four of these signs - one on each of the main roads into Martham - which contain representations of different elements of the village's identity. As can be seen in Plate 10.8, these elements (which are distinctly 'rural') include the area's agricultural industry, the village pond, the church, the river/broad, and both a traditional wind-pump and modern wind turbine. Information about, and photos of, the windfarm also appear on Martham's page of the independent tourism website, 'Tour Norfolk' (2014).

The representational use of the windfarm indicates that, whilst not completely uncontroversial, the windfarm has to some extent been integrated into people's everyday conceptualisations of the landscape and 'community' constructions of

Martham as a place. By being used as a distinguishing feature within community representations, it is starting to become incorporated into the shared meanings (and perhaps future social memories) related to the place, which, as Chapter Six revealed, are significant to place attachment processes.

Plate 10.8: Martham's four village 'welcome' signs

It is notable that, although wind turbines featured in local photographers' work in Mullion and Askam, no evidence was found of similar references to windfarms in representations of these other two case studies. Whilst this observation alone does not point to any conclusions, I suggest that, in light of the interview findings, it is the association between historic and modern wind turbines that has particularly helped to facilitate their incorporation into Martham's identity as a rural and traditional village.

Plate 10.9: Historical congruence? The remains of Somerton wind-pump with Blood Hill Windfarm in the background

The parallels between windfarms and existing local contexts is particularly apparent in places with a history of windmills but, as 10.2.3 showed, it is also possible to draw positive connections between windfarms and other aspects of place; both in terms of material features and sociocultural understandings. Identifying the 'local contexts' within which change is seen as positive (as well as negative) is important for considering how rural landscapes can be managed with as much sensitivity to local opinion as possible. Highlighting both historic change and ongoing continuity may hold potential for facilitating planning and community engagement processes (regarding a wide range of developments, not just windfarms), which are sensitive to community priorities and open up discussions about how change can be managed most appropriately.

10.6 Conclusion

As may be detected within the accounts presented in this chapter, the extent to which interviewees explained their opinions on windfarms varied considerably. Their accounts included a mix (to varying degrees) of clearly pre-considered reasons behind their attitudes and more un-reflexive reactions to questions about the windfarm's presence. Often, those with initially un-reflexive reactions then considered the question more fully and provided a more considered response. Others (particularly those with ambivalent feelings), however, showed no particular interest in the topic. This level of consideration is reflective of the participants' strength of opinion about the windfarm and the extent to which they perceived it as a un/remarkable feature of the place they were discussing. As such, attitudes towards existing windfarms emerge as being complexly influenced by a combination of factors. Employing Fig. 9.1 as a guide for analysis enabled these to be usefully unravelled according to the broad themes it identifies. For clarity, I summarise these below.

First, attitudes were shaped, to some extent, by discursive interpretations of rurality, (post)nature and temporality within participants' conceptualisations of place. Judgements about the aesthetics of the windfarms were particularly interesting for their allusion to the turbines either as 'eyesores' that, as industrial objects, stand out from the surrounding countryside, or as positive symbols of technological progress, environmental friendliness and the human utilisation of natural resources. These judgements were shown to be influenced by the extent to which the participants perceived the countryside as a bounded, timeless and 'natural' place, or as a relational, evolving and hybrid co-construction.

Second, attitudes towards the local windfarm emerged as informed, in part, by experiential factors; i.e. personal experiences of having lived with the windfarm for several years. Much of the ambivalence about the windfarms was related to the their longevity, which had enabled them to become absorbed into the background of everyday lives and place-based activities. However, for some of those with strongly sceptical views, the windfarm's presence strengthened and reaffirmed their doubts about the technology, as (for example) witnessing frequent inactivity underscored a belief in wind energy's inefficiency. Experiences of the landscape prior to the windfarm's construction also affected the way it was perceived, particularly if the windfarm altered a valued landscape or disrupted a treasured view. On the other hand, more supportive opinions emerged with reference to embodied experiences of walking under, touching, or watching the turbines, which were linked with an awe and fascination in their form and technological quality. For some interviewees, they also took on positive significance as landmarks signalling 'home'.

Third, opinions were identified as being influenced by 'assessments of utility'; i.e. conscious deliberations about the windfarm's usefulness, and its relative costs and benefits. Beliefs about the need for alternative forms of energy in the light of concerns about energy security and climate change; visual and noise-related impacts for

proximal residents; economic benefits for the community; and positive and negative environmental impacts (both local and global), were all enrolled in shaping attitudes. Participants also considered alternative possibilities, with hypothetical comparisons to nuclear power stations contributing to a reasoned acceptance of the windfarm as a preferred option. Those more opposing to the windfarm, on the other hand, considered other forms of renewable energy, such as marine and tidal energy, to be hypothetically preferable. Displays of rationalised thought-processes were particularly prominent in the accounts of people who did not necessarily like the windfarm but were prepared to accept its presence because of its environmental benefits; or who did not feel personally affected by it but empathised with those that were. These evaluations highlight the rational element to people's responses to change and add weight to the now widespread critique of NIMBYism as an explanation for windfarm opposition; as opinions are rarely based purely on selfish and emotive responses (e.g. Bell et al., 2005; Devine-Wright, 2005; Haggett & Toke, 2006; Wolsink, 1994).

Finally, an important factor in determining attitudes towards windfarms is local context. The discussions in 10.5 about variations in opinions between each of the three case studies highlighted that specific local and site conditions (such as the presence of a local protest group; the topography of the landscape; the site's previous land-use; and existing landscape features) influence how each windfarm is perceived. As 10.5.3 especially highlighted, the wider social and historical context of the area can play an important role in influencing whether the windfarm is seen to maintain or disrupt continuity with existing identifying features and social place-meanings. Since emotional attachments to place were found to be strong among all participants (see Chapters Six and Seven), it is unsurprising that the specifics of local contexts exert a strong influence over opinions; and may even lead to an apparent mismatch between residents' attitudes towards wind energy in general and their local windfarm in particular. 'Local contexts' could, therefore, be described as a critical factor through which the other elements in Fig. 9.1 are filtered.

Chapter 11. Conclusion: Understanding rural place-change

11.1 Introduction

This thesis has explored the temporal aspects of people-place relationships and shed light on how changes to rural places/landscapes are experienced, perceived and adjusted to by residents. It has done so through empirical analyses of seventy-eight emplaced, oral (hi)story interviews (including twenty-eight walking interviews) with residents in three English villages: Mullion (Cornwall); Askam-in-Furness (Cumbria); and Martham (Norfolk).

As this chapter shall highlight, a number of key findings have emerged from the thesis in relation to the research aim, which was identified in Chapter One as:

> ***To explore the role of temporality in relationships with place and landscape and understand how rural place-change is experienced and adjusted to over time.***

Specifically, this aim was addressed through exploring the following three research questions:

1. *How is the past enrolled in individual and collective relationships with rural place and responses to change?*
2. *How are discursive ideas about 'nature' and heritage enrolled into processes of rural place identity and perceptions of non-'natural' structures in the landscape?*
3. *How are existing windfarms, as examples of recent material change in rural landscapes, perceived, made sense of and incorporated into processes of place identity and attachment?*

A review of the relevant literature (Chapters Two and Three) led to the identification of five factors affecting rural place experience (as represented in Fig. 3.1): rural representations; personal experiences; social memories; social practices; and understandings of (post)nature. These were used to guide the subsequent analyses

relating to research questions one and two - the findings from which informed the development of a more sophisticated analytical framework (Fig. 9.1) that draws together multiple themes shaping attitudes to rural place-change. This framework's value has been demonstrated through applying it to the subject of windfarms (Chapter Ten), thereby helping to meet the third research question.

This chapter continues in 11.2 with an evaluation of the framework, including consideration of its limitations and potential future applications. Next, 11.3 summarises the research's key findings and appraises their contribution to existing geographical knowledge. 11.4 then examines the research's strengths and limitations and identifies opportunities for future work to build on the findings and further enhance geographical understanding in this area.

11.2 Understanding attitudes to rural place-change: Evaluating the analytical framework

The value of the heuristic framework represented in Fig. 9.1 lies in its ability to help identify the multiple, complex and relational factors that shape attitudes to rural place-change. This is important in the context of a continuously evolving, multifunctional countryside for understanding the impact of change on rural residents and for informing appropriate management approaches, as this chapter shall underscore. The framework incorporates both discursive and experiential factors, thereby allowing the relevance and insights of multiple theoretical approaches to place and landscape (as discussed in Chapter Three) to be explored and employed in efforts to understand experiences of rural change.

The framework was applied to the topic of windfarms in Chapter Ten, where it was used as a guide to organise the themes emerging from the interviews. This helped

provide analytical clarity to the discussions and facilitated consideration of the salient points. As 11.3.3 will discuss, identifying the influences of discursive interpretations of rural place (post)nature and place temporality; experiential factors; assessments of utility; and local contexts provided insights into how attitudes towards existing windfarms (and other material changes) are shaped – and potentially re-shaped – over time, revealing constructions of place identity and attachment to be relatively accommodating of change. The 'local contexts' element of the framework proved to be particularly crucial, as it had implications for how other elements were interpreted. The framework's inclusion of this element thus promotes an explicit recognition that:

> "Context is fundamental to social phenomena. Attempts to explain social life with context-independent theories, however well-developed and sophisticated they may be, thus fundamentally fail to capture its situated and contextual nature"
>
> (Hargreaves, 2012, p.316 c.f. Flyvberg, 2001).

The research findings suggest that constructions of place identity are able (within limits) to be reshaped to incorporate change within them. Using the analytical framework, it is possible to add nuance to this observation by identifying certain elements of place-experience as being more amenable to adjustment than others. Time was found to have a positive moderating influence on experiential factors (as changes become incorporated into 'natural attitudes', personal memories and embodied experiences of place) and local contexts (as new social memories and meanings are attached to new structures/situations). Discursive interpretations of rurality, (post)nature and place-temporality are perhaps more rigid, but their multiple and contradictory nature allows space for them to be revised or re-interpreted under the right conditions (Halfacree, 2006a). However, assessments of utility – which are essentially issue-based rather than place-based - are less likely to be re-evaluated over the course of time, particularly for those initially strongly opposed to the change (as indicated by the continued presence of scepticism regarding the windfarms). Thus, although place identities and attachments are re-created over time to accommodate, and soften negative perceptions of, change, opinions about the particular technologies

engendering the change (e.g. windfarms) are not reshaped in the same way (though may be modified in the light of new information).

Although the framework was shown to be a useful analytical device, the process of applying it to the topic of windfarms highlighted two key limitations to what it can offer. First (as mentioned in 9.2), since the framework refers to the attitude of an individual, it does not promote sufficient consideration of the politics that are infused in issues of rural change. For instance, studies of rural protests have highlighted how certain groups can manipulate particular representations of rurality, 'nature' and the environment, and/or employ strategies to delegitimise the views of others, in order to further their agendas (e.g. Cass & Walker, 2009; Devine-Wright & Devine-Wright, 2006; Haggett et al., 2011; Sturzaker, 2010; Warren et al., 2005), but it is unclear how such activities might influence an individual's particular interpretation of rural place temporality and their consequent attitude to change. Furthermore, how might these political forces also affect the emotions and experiences of individuals (experiential factors) at a later date when the change has been implemented? Assessments of utility and perceptions of in/congruence with local contexts may also be influenced by the views and efforts of other actors, even years after initial debates. Although the presence of political factors has been acknowledged within this research, the focus on individual experiences has limited the attention given to them, and they are not fully represented within Fig. 9.1. The influence of political factors on attitudes to rural change is, therefore, an important area for further research.

Second, Fig. 9.1 is limited in its ability to represent the relationships and interactions between the different elements it identifies. Constructions and processes of rural identity and place experience have been highlighted throughout this thesis as fluid and relational; making attempts to categorise and label different elements problematic (and arguably erroneous). Although efforts were made to consider the relational character of these processes in Chapter Ten, the framework was of limited use in this respect, as it

says little about how its different elements are dialectically interrelated and does not explicitly encourage these relationships to be examined. There is, therefore, scope for greater attention to be paid to the dependencies, interactions and contradictions between discursive interpretations, experiential factors, assessments of utility and local contexts; and their consequent outcome on attitudes. Longitudinal research examining the influence of time on these processes would also be valuable (see also 11.4).

Despite these limitations, the usefulness of the framework as an analytical device suggests scope for it to be further developed. For instance, it could be adapted to draw out its applied importance and make it suitable for use in policy and decision-making arenas. A toolkit might be produced for those negotiating, managing and implementing physical rural changes that encourages each of the framework's elements to be considered and addressed when engaging with the rural residents who will be affected. Such a toolkit would not necessarily use the same language or structure as Fig. 9.1, but would use it as a frame of reference to ensure that planned changes i) seek maximum congruence with/minimal impact on place-related meanings; ii) avoid negative impacts on personal place-based experiences; iii) demonstrate and maximise their utility; and iv) take account of place-specificities and local meanings.

11.3 Key findings

The analytical framework discussed above was developed from the research findings as a way of enhancing understandings about attitudes towards rural place-change. Its development thus encompasses a number of key findings that help meet the research aims. These are summarised below.

11.3.1 The role of the past in experiences of place and change

Throughout this thesis, engagements with a place's past and conceptualisations of its temporal nature (as stable or fluid) have emerged as important elements in the construction of place-based identities and consequent responses to change. Chapter Six showed how, on an individual level, discursive representations and personal experiences of rural landscapes are both significant in the construction of place identity and the creation of emotive bonds through which people feel attached to their place of residence. This enhances our understanding of the experience (rather than production; see Halfacree (2006a)) of rural space and provides insights into the effects of economic restructuring and social re-composition on everyday rural lives (rather than on the countryside more generally (see Marsden et al., 1990; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994; Woods, 2005a; 2006; 2007)). The findings also support arguments for a theoretically plural (Murdoch, 2003), or middle-ground (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992), approach to studying place and landscape that considers both experiential and discursive elements (Bender, 2001; Holloway, 2003a; Olwig, 2008).

The sociality of place was highlighted in Chapter Seven as forming an integral part of place identity, with a 'sense of community' being highly valued by the majority of participants. Crucially, this sense of community was not only based on current social relations; it was also iterated in relation to the villages' pasts and maintained through shared memories and social practices. In the context of social and demographic change, local history practices emerged as a way of retaining a link with the 'roots' of a place and asserting 'belonging' (for both lifelong and newer residents) through the demonstration of local knowledge. These practices thus enabled a sense of continuity to be maintained despite changes that may be occurring. These findings provide further support to geographical accounts that stress the importance of both personal and collective history and memory in shaping people's relational perceptions of landscape (Bender, 1993; Harvey, 2002; Ingold, 1993; Jones, 2005), and their sense of

attachment to, and belonging in, place (Lewicka, 2008; Liepins, 2000a; Massey, 1995). They also build upon these by illustrating how, whilst changes to some place assets will be resisted, local history practices allow some change to be accommodated by maintaining links to the past.

Given the emphasis placed on 'community' by participants (see Chapter Seven), it is perhaps unsurprising that the changes they discussed most were those they perceived as impacting, either positively or negatively, on the social life of the village (e.g. housing developments that brought in new people or affected housing affordability for locals). The aesthetics of the physical place and landscape were less discussed, although this could indicate a taken-for-grantedness of the physical backdrop due to the absence of proposed change and perceived stability of landscape (Crouch & Parker, 2003). The research thus contributes to the limited work exploring residents' experiences of rural change (Cloke et al., 1997; Day, 1998; Mahon, 2007; Panelli, 2001) and expands it to combine considerations of physical and social change.

11.3.2 'Nature', heritage and perceptions of non-'natural' structures

In addition to personal and collective forms of memory and experience, discursive ideas about rurality and 'nature' were identified throughout Chapters Six to Eight as influencing perceptions of rural place and its temporality. The investigations in these chapters revealed traces of a perceived timelessness (inherent in idyllic discourses of rurality) within residents' accounts, which were found to have an influence over responses to change through evoking nostalgia for the past and exacerbating perceptions of incongruence between modern objects and the traditional, 'natural' landscape (c.f. Bunce, 2003; Massey, 1994; Pred, 1984). However, these analyses also uncovered an openness to change among some individuals, who displayed an acknowledgement of rural landscapes as continuously evolving and co-constructed by humans and non-humans – or, in other words, as processual (c.f. Bender, 2002;

Massey, 1994) and post-natural (c.f. Anderson, 2009; Castree, 2005; Swyngedouw, 1999). Importantly, though, these should not be considered as distinct standpoints to which individuals neatly subscribe, as interpretations are dependent upon the specifics of the issue and are influenced by rational assessments and emotive responses. Thus, the position of an individual on one change may be inconsistent or contradictory with their stance on another.

The implications of ideas about 'nature' and heritage for understanding perceptions of human-induced alterations to the landscape (specifically in the form of artificial or non-'natural' structures) were particularly considered in Chapter Seven through three examples from the case studies: Askam's mining landscape; Mullion Harbour; and Goonhilly Earth Station. Attitudes towards these were found to be framed with reference to concepts of heritage and the wider ways in which landscapes have been shaped by humans over time. Interpretations were highlighted as multiple and nuanced, with the accounts of several participants demonstrating that they are not naïve to the contradictions and tensions inherent within traditional divisions between 'nature' and 'culture', perceptions of aesthetic beauty, social constructions of 'heritage' and discursive representations of rural landscapes as 'natural', traditional and unchanging. The examples illustrated how non-'natural' structures can, over time, be imbued with considerable cultural meaning to the point that they become symbols of an essentialised place; but their relative newness as a human introduction to an evolving landscape can also be recognised.

There is thus an acknowledgement within lay, as well as academic, knowledges that concepts of heritage "have always developed and changed according to the contemporary societal context of transforming power relationships and nascent national (and other) identities" (Harvey, 2001, p.335). The findings also indicate a potential for newer artificial structures, including wind turbines (see 11.3.3), to be incorporated into constructions of place identity over time. Policy-makers might facilitate this process by

seeking to site new developments in a way that does not disrupt particularly valued place assets, such as symbolic heritage features or the social practices and memories that contribute to a sense of community.

The overt temporally-mindful approach to exploring experiences of rural place (and their implications for responses to change) has, as discussed here, provided key insights into the overlaps and interactions between academic theorisations of place and landscape and lay conceptualisations of these concepts; thereby answering calls for greater attention to be paid to these (Halfacree, 1993; Jones, 1995).

11.3.3 Accommodating windfarms within place identity and attachment

The findings discussed in Chapter Ten contribute to our broad understanding of how material changes are incorporated into processes of place identity and attachment over time through focussing on attitudes towards existing windfarms. Using Fig. 9.1 as a guide, the discussion traced the discursive interpretations, experiential factors, assessments of utility, and relevance of local contexts involved in shaping attitudes and analysed the complex, messy and intertwining factors in some detail.

The findings revealed sentiments towards the windfarms to be less negative than is often portrayed through media-reported controversies and studies that explore reasons behind opposition to energy technologies (e.g. Brittan, 2001; Devine-Wright, 2009; Devine-Wright, 2013a; Haggett & Toke, 2006; Short, 2002; Toke et al., 2008). Whilst issues and questions around the efficiency, suitability and negative impact of windfarms on people and wildlife remain salient, a notable sense of ambivalence emerged from the interviews, with many residents displaying little interest in, or strong opinions about, their local windfarm. In many instances, the windfarms had faded into the background of everyday life. The increasing familiarity of the wind turbines in the landscape, and absence of negative impacts for most individuals, had enabled them to

become accommodated within existing conceptualisations of the rural place. Although some people perceived a conflict between the modern, 'unnaturalness' of the windfarm and the 'naturalness' of the traditional countryside (c.f. Brittan, 2001; Short, 2002; Warren et al., 2005), others did not notice them on an everyday basis. They, therefore, either did not generally reflect on their presence, or explicitly recognised them as one element in a fluid, relational and hybrid landscape (as also found with the older non-'natural' objects discussed in Chapter Seven).

The prevalence of ambivalent opinions in the interviews suggests that individuals and communities are more able to accommodate the addition of 'unnatural' structures into rural landscapes than is sometimes assumed. The research thus offers a key contribution to the renewable energy literature by adding to the relatively scarce work identifying perceptions of existing (rather than proposed) wind energy projects (other examples include Eltham et al., 2008; Warren et al., 2005; Wolsink, 1989). The attention to the whole range of attitudes, including those of ambivalence, also significantly enhances a holistic understanding of the issue, as previous studies (e.g. Groth & Vogt, 2014) have tended to focus on explaining opinions of opposition or support, thereby neglecting more neutral positions.

The research found that some of those who support their local windfarm perceive it as a positive aspect of place because of its association with 'progress'. These expressions of pride suggest that, as with wave and tidal energy technologies (Bailey et al., 2011; Devine-Wright, 2011b; McLachlan, 2009) and community-owned windfarms (Musall & Kuik, 2011), commercially-owned windfarms have the potential to be postiviely interpreted as having symbolic meanings associated with place. This potential, however, is not currently maximised. Encouraging a more engaged relationship between developers and the local community, and a greater integration of windfarms with other 'green' community-oriented projects in the area, might have positive benefits by encouraging pro-environmental activities and bolstering positive associations

between place and wind technology. The development of a policy toolkit based on the elements of Fig. 9.1 may offer one way of facilitating this process (see 11.2).

11.4 Research strengths, limitations and future research opportunities

11.4.1 Experiential elements of place-perception

Experiences of rural place and change have emerged throughout this thesis as shaped by a number of discursive and experiential factors. The insights discussed above have been enabled by the qualitative and inductive approach described in Chapter Five. In particular, the emplaced and mobile interview approaches, which helped create relaxed, informal and fruitful research encounters, were effective at drawing out the nuances and specificities involved in people-place relationships. Although the experiential elements of people's engagements with the world are difficult to fully elicit, interpret and represent (Latham, 2003), exploring oral (hi)stories and talking to people within the context of the place in question allowed, to some extent, a sense of the affective, sensuous and emotive power of place for the participant to be gained by the researcher (c.f. Anderson, 2004; Riley, 2010). The walking interviews in particular brought aspects of the landscape to the fore that participants did not normally reflect on and would not necessarily have discussed without its material presence. An examination of social and discursive influences was also enabled by attending to the wider social contexts of the case studies and the conscious deliberations that participants made about questions of rural change. The understandings presented here are, nevertheless, acknowledged as inevitably interpretive, partial and situated (c.f. Haraway, 1988).

By seeking to engage with the experiential elements of place through empirical research with participants, the research has reiterated the importance of personal memories, past experiences and embodied encounters in shaping perceptions of rural

place, landscape, temporality and change. The walking interviews were particularly useful for examining these, as they enabled me to share some of the direct experiences discussed by participants and observe something of how they corporeally engaged with the landscape. There is, however, scope for further work within this vein to deepen understanding of how perceptions of place and change alter over time. For instance, repeat walking interviews with participants might follow the same routes taken to explore elements of change within them, or might be undertaken at different times of the year or in different weathers to gain a greater understanding of how seasonal and climatic conditions variably affect experiences. Appreciation for how windfarms (as an example of non-'natural' change) are directly experienced might also be enhanced by predetermining interview routes that involve walking near, or beneath, the turbines. The few references to such close encounters by participants indicated that the turbines can evoke a sense of awe and fascination, but it would be interesting to investigate other possible responses and to untangle the relationships between these and people's wider evaluations of the windfarm's value.

11.4.2 Assessing the relative importance of physical and social change

A key strength of this research lies in its inductive approach to perceptions of change, which did not overtly privilege predetermined subjects of interest. Although questions about the windfarms were included in all interview conversations to provide some focus to the research, participants were first encouraged to discuss the aspects of place and change that were of most concern to them. This approach enabled the relative (perceived) importance of different changes to be considered and the strength of feeling about a 'sense of community' and issues of social change to emerge. Comparatively, the windfarms appeared to be of little ongoing concern to residents. However, as noted in 5.4.3, the majority of research participants were recruited through gatekeepers, such as the parish council, local history society and other community groups. It is, therefore, unsurprising that the people that I spoke to displayed an interest

in community matters and deemed them to be important. These groups can also be politically motivated and have biases in their social make-up (Hoggart & Henderson, 2005; Sturzaker, 2010; Tewdwr-Jones, 1998; Yarwood, 2002). Consequently, generalisations cannot be made about the value placed upon 'community' by all village residents, as those who place less importance on it are less likely to have volunteered for the research.

Processes of change must also be considered in the context of their scale and speed. The change to the size and make-up of population in the three villages has arguably had more of a dramatic impact on the social networks and relationships (and thus everyday lives) of the communities than the presence of wind turbines has had on the overall look and feel of the landscape. Additionally, whilst the introduction of wind turbines can be seen as a sudden intrusion to begin with, the change comes to a relatively abrupt halt on the installation's completion; allowing adjustment to take place over time. Community growth and change, on the other hand, is more of a gradual, accumulative, yet nevertheless prominent, process. Potential and abrupt changes, such as the installation of wind turbines, may appear threatening at the time of the event (thus highlighting the value of the landscape for place identity and prompting place-protective action) but, even if disliked, subsequently usually fade out of consciousness into the background of everyday life as other concerns and transformations take over. The lack of potential landscape change at the time of fieldwork may, therefore, have contributed to participants' emphasis on social issues and obscured the importance of the material landscape in perceptions of change. Wider, longitudinal research into an array of changes at different moments in their emergence and establishment is needed to further unravel these processes.

11.4.3 Attitudes towards existing windfarms

The research's broad, inductive approach to perceptions of change also, importantly,

avoided only attracting volunteer participants who had particularly strong opinions about windfarms. This method allowed the whole range of attitudes to be explored with equal emphasis and was particularly instrumental in identifying the significant presence of ambivalence, sceptical tolerance and rationalised acceptance (in addition to stark opposition or support) among residents near existing windfarms. This finding represents a key contribution of the research to existing knowledge, as these more nuanced opinions have arguably been neglected by previous (particularly quantitative) studies of windfarm attitudes (Ellis et al., 2007). The extent of this potential neglect is, however, difficult to determine from this research, as it is unclear whether ambivalence was as present at the time of the windfarms' construction or whether opposition/support has weakened over time. Future, longitudinal research that tracks individuals' attitudes over the course of time would, therefore, be valuable.

An element of caution is also required when considering the implications of conclusions about ambivalence, as the presence of long-term ambivalence does not justify the indiscriminate construction of windfarms on the basis that people will 'get used to them' with time. It is possible that those most affected by the windfarms found them to be so objectionable that they had moved away from the area prior to my fieldwork, or that they were simply not included in the relatively small research sample. Furthermore, considerable scepticism regarding the value of the windfarms persisted in all the case studies, and was exacerbated in Askam due to the particular local context. This finding highlights the importance of effective engagement between developers and residents and of paying attention to local specificities in the siting of windfarms. It is also important to acknowledge that the case study windfarms are all reasonably small in comparison to some of the more recent offshore windfarms in the UK and mega-projects elsewhere (e.g. California, see Pasqualetti, 2000). This limited size is likely to be an important factor in mitigating the impact of windfarms on place attachment and identity (Devine-Wright, 2005), although conducting similar, qualitative research into residents' opinions of larger projects is needed to confirm or reject such a hypothesis.

11.5 Final remarks

This thesis has made a key contribution to the literature by taking a holistic approach to analysing perceptions of rural change, which considers both discursive and experiential elements involved in interpretations of rural place, landscape and temporality. Experiences of rural place and attitudes to change have been identified as involving a messy combination of dialectically related factors and processes, including discursive interpretations (of rural place, (post)nature and temporality); personal experiences (including memories and embodied experiences); conscious assessments of utility (including costs and benefits); and local contexts (including social memories and shared place-meanings). The identification and representation of these factors in Fig. 9.1 provides an enhanced understanding of these complex processes, offering an analytical device through which future investigations into specific rural changes might be usefully approached.

This research has encompassed a wide range of themes and elicited a number of useful findings. However, if there is one overall conclusion to be made, it is that, under the right conditions, constructions of place-based identities (and the attachments resulting from these) are strong enough and malleable enough to accommodate a certain amount of change. By recognising this adaptability, and revealing the multiple ways in which rural place and change are understood by rural residents (including interpretations that align with theorisations of place as post-natural, processual and relational), the research has opened up possibilities for thinking about more effective ways of framing and discussing potential changes with local communities. Thus, managing change in ways that i) protect or enhance particularly valued place-assets; ii) maintain a sense of continuity with the past or align with existing social contexts; and iii) facilitate a recognition and celebration of the evolving, living nature of place, holds promise for negotiating solutions to the increasing pressures placed on rural space that are mindful of the needs and wishes of local people.

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Appendix A.

Wheeler, R. (2014) 'Mining memories in a rural community: Landscape, temporality and place identity' *Journal of Rural Studies*, 36 (0). pp 22-32.

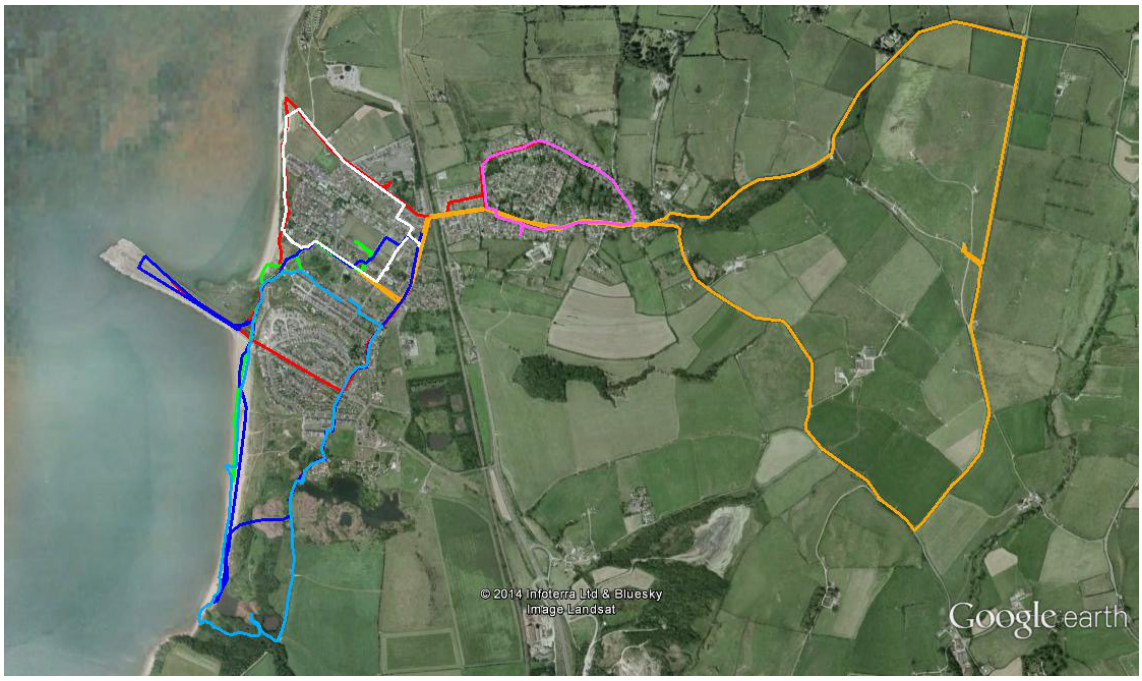
(NB: This appendix has been removed for copyright protection reasons. The paper can be accessed directly from the Journal of Rural Studies, as detailed above)

Appendix B. Maps showing routes taken in walking interviews

Mullion

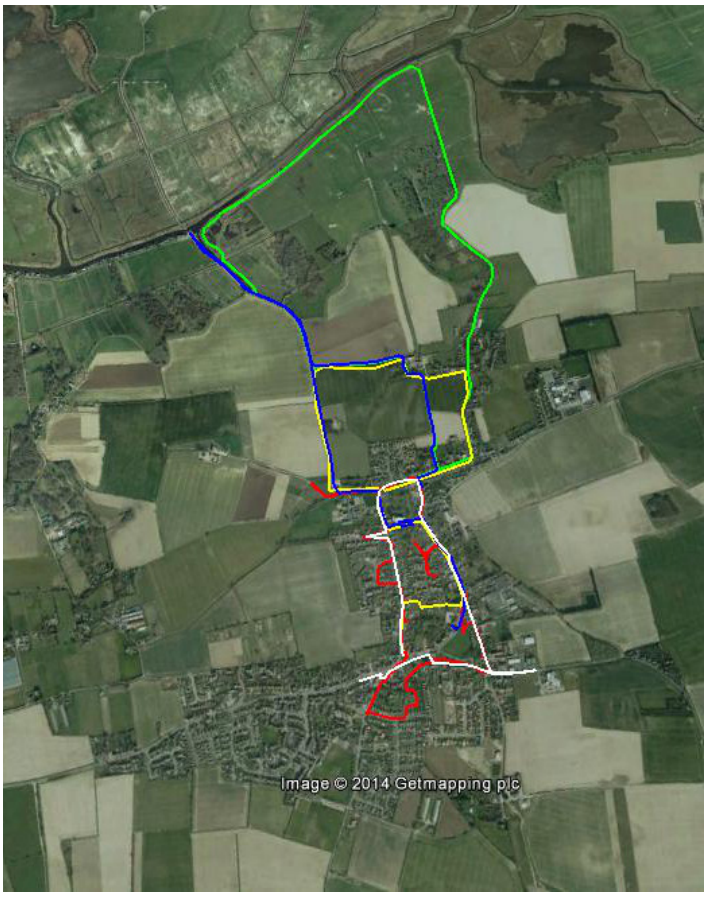
Red = Derek
Turquoise = Lynette
Dark pink = Michael
White = Alan
Light purple = Emma
Orange/yellow = Nicola
Yellow = Barbara
Blue = Philippa
Green = Bill

Askam and Ireleth



Dark blue = Wilfred and James
Green = Mick
Light blue – Simon and Naomi Pink = Ethel and Cassie
Orange = Jim
Red = Jane
White = Hannah
Not shown (off map area) = Roz

Martham



Blue = Paddy
Green = Cathy, Carl, Margaret & Gerald
Red = Mary
White = Vernon
Yellow = Mike

Appendix C. Interview prompts

N.B: The following questions were used as a loose guide for introducing topics/prompting discussions after pauses during the interviews. In reality, they formed only a small part of the interviews, which, as discussed in Chapter Five, were unstructured and dependent on the flow of the conversation.

Place identity and attachment

- How long have you lived in the area? Like/dislike? Why?
- What is it about <case study> that attracted you to living/staying here?
- How would you describe <case study>?
- Is the area special to you? What do you think makes it what it is?
- Tell me about how you think of <case study> and the surrounding area – is it 'home' to you?
- What's it like living here? Is there a sense of community?
- What do you think of the local environment? Is it important?

Landscape character/value

- Tell me about where we are/ why you have chosen this route
- Do you come for walks often? What else do you do in your spare time?
- How would you describe the surrounding landscape?
- Do you spend much time 'out and about' in the surrounding countryside / Do you often go for walks/bike rides etc.? (*What is it that you enjoy about this?)*
- Are there parts of the local area/landscape which are particularly special to you?

Change

- What changes have you seen since living here?
- Are these good or bad?
- Do you think these changes have affected relationships in the community? Is everyone in agreement?
- Do you think about these changes often / how big an issue are they?

Issues

- What do you think are the main issues for <case study>?
- Does anything concern you about the future of the area?

Windfarm

I'm particularly interested in windfarms as a relatively recent change…

- What do you think about it? How does it make you feel?
- Did you think about it when moving here, did it strike you as dominant? / do you remember when it was built? Was there much controversy? Have your feelings changed at all?
- Would it worry you if more were put up?
- Do you think they fundamentally changed the character of the area? What was it like before?
- What kind of impacts has it had, if any? Are the turbines still talked about? Is the windfarm seen as part of the area? Is it a positive or a negative?

Other non-'natural' structures

- What do you think of the <earth station/airbase/mining remnants/windmills/harbour/ housing etc.>?

Appendix D. Sample leaflet/poster used to recruit participants

Experiences of place and change in Martham

Volunteers wanted!

My name is Becca Wheeler and I'm a PhD student in geography at Plymouth University. During September 2013 I will be carrying out some research in the Martham area and would really appreciate your help!

My project explores the significance of the local landscape, environment and 'place' for people living in rural areas. I aim to understand how past and recent changes to the landscape around Martham are experienced by local residents today, and how these changes are incorporated into the way in which they think about the area.

I am looking for volunteers from this area to participate in the research by taking part in a 'walking interview', which is simply an informal conversation with me whilst on the move. I am interested in your thoughts on the landscape, change, and what makes Martham important (or not) for you.

If you are interested in taking part, or simply finding out more, then please call me on: <<phone number>> or email: <<email address>>.

Thank you

Becca

Appendix E. Risk assessment

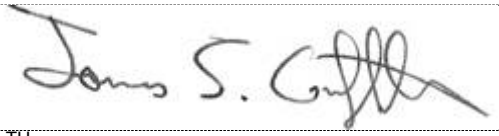
Faculty of Science and Technology
School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Risk Assessment Form

Project/ activity/task: Travelling to/staying in small rural communities and conducting walking interviews and focus groups in the local area

Emergency telephone nos. Dr Richard Yarwood: 01752 585983 (direct line). Geography school office: 01752 585999

Hazards	Persons at Risk	Probability	Severity	Risk Factor[2]	Controls in Place /[1]Action to be taken
Lone working (i.e. personal injury/accidents, attacks to person)	Researcher (Rebecca Eastman)	1	3	3	Regular check-in system arranged with Director of Studies
Injury from tripping or slipping;	Researcher + 30 – 60 participants in total (1 participant per interview)	2	2	4	Wear suitable footwear; shoes/boots with good grips
Over-exertion from steep ascents or descents	Researcher + 30 – 60 participants in total (1 participant per interview)	1	3	3	Length and route of walk defined by interviewee and pace set by interview or interviewer (whichever is slowest) with breaks where necessary Researcher to be first-aid trained and to carry first aid kit and mobile phones in case of accident.
Exposure to heat, cold or wetness from weather or environment	Researcher + 30 – 60 participants in total (1 participant per interview)	2	2	4	Participants recommended to wear and/or carry the following (as appropriate): Waterproofs; Layers of clothing to regulate temperature (e.g. T shirt, shirt, jumper, fleece); Gloves and hat; Lightweight trousers.

					Strong, supportive footwear; Sun cream and sunhat; Water Interview to be suspended if weather conditions considered too adverse.
Ticks	Researcher + 30 – 60 participants in total (1 participant per interview)	1	3	3	Participants recommended to cover legs and arms and advised that if a tick is detected, attempt should not be made to pull it out as the head may remain embedded. Instead, cover with Vaseline to suffocate the tick and then remove it with tweezers. Researcher to carry 'tick kit'.
Injury from traffic	Researcher + 30 – 60 participants in total (1 participant per interview)	1	3	3	Researcher and participants to be aware of busy roads and walk in single-file, facing the direction of traffic where no pavements are available.

Assessed by	REBECCA EASTMAN
(signed)	R. Eastman
(date)	15th September 2012
Approved by HOS	PROFESSOR JIM GRIFFITHS
(signed)	
(date)	17TH September 2012

KEY

PROBABILITY	SEVERITY	RISK FACTOR[1]	
Probable 3	**Critical 3**	**6 – 9**	**High Risk [2]**
Possible 2	**Serious 2**	**4**	**Medium Risk**
Unlikely 1	**Minor 1**	**1 – 3**	**Low Risk**

[1] The risk factor is the product of Probability and Severity. The probability is based on the situation after the controls are in place or action to be taken is allowed for.
[2] As stated in the School Safety Handbook, a high risk activity has no place in our School and will not be sanctioned.

Appendix F. Research information sheet given to participants

PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET (Walking interview)

Name of Principal Investigator: Rebecca Wheeler

Title of Research: Experiences of place and change in rural landscapes

Aim of research:
This project is part of my PhD in Geography and explores the significance of the local landscape, environment and 'place' for people living in rural areas. The research aims to understand how changes to the landscape around Martham are experienced by those living there and how these changes are incorporated into the way in which people think about their local place.

Benefits of participating:
The research is designed to gain a greater understanding of the importance of rural places, landscapes and environments for the people who live there, and how changes are experienced. Participating in the research will allow you the opportunity to contribute your feelings and opinions on these themes and to voice any concerns/issues you may have about past or present changes in your local area. A summary of research findings will be made available to you, should you wish, once the project has been completed.

Description of procedure:
You will be asked to guide me (the researcher) on a short walk of your choosing in the surrounding area. The length and route of this walk is entirely your choice, although you might like to think about walking to/via sites that are particularly important to you in some way, or that show aspects of the landscape which particularly please or concern you. These sites could include features that you feel particularly contribute to (or detract from) the character of the area, or that hold particular memories (either good or bad) for you. I am interested in chatting to you during the walk about your thoughts and feelings regarding the landscape, what it means to you, and the changes that you have noticed since living here.

Description of risks:
You will not be intentionally exposed to any unusual risks. Since you will be walking whilst talking, please ensure that you wear suitable footwear to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls and appropriate clothing to protect yourself from the elements!

Right to withdraw:
This project is due to be completed in September 2014. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any point before this. If requested, a written transcript of the interview will be sent to you for you to approve before anything you say is included in the research outputs. Your contributions will be kept entirely anonymous, unless you expressly agree otherwise.

If you are dissatisfied with the way the research is conducted, please contact the principal investigator, Becca Wheeler, in the first instance: telephone number 07921 916660. If you feel the problem has not been resolved please contact the secretary to the Faculty of Science and Technology Human Ethics Committee: Mrs Paula Simson 01752 584503. You may also contact the PhD supervisor, Dr Richard Yarwood: 01752 585983.

Appendix G. Participant consent form

CONSENT TO PARICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT

Name of Researcher: Rebecca Wheeler

Title of Research: Experiences of place and change in rural landscapes

Purpose of work:
This project explores the significance of the local landscape, environment and 'place' for people living in rural areas. The research aims to understand how changes to the landscape of the Martham area are experienced by those living there, and how these changes are incorporated into the way in which people think about their local place.

The objectives of this research have been explained to me.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any stage, and ask for my data to be destroyed if I wish.

I understand that my anonymity is guaranteed, unless I expressly state otherwise.

I agree to a generic description of my occupation/position in the community *(e.g. farmer, retired, parish councillor, etc.)* being used in the research
Yes ☐ *No* ☐

I would like to see a copy of the interview transcript before it is used further in the research
Yes ☐ *No* ☐

I understand that the Principal Investigator of this work will have attempted, as far as possible, to avoid any risks, and that safety and health risks will have been separately assessed by appropriate authorities.

I understand the risks involved in participating in the research and confirm that I am fit and healthy enough to participate in a walking interview. I agree to stick to public access land in choosing the route for the walk

I understand that if I choose to bring anyone under the age of 18 on the walk, I am responsible for them.

Under these circumstances, I agree to participate in the research.

Name: …….

Signature: .....…….. Date:

Email or postal address (if you wish to see a copy of the transcript)……..……
……
Occupation:
……...

Age group: 18 – 24 25 – 34 35 – 44 45 – 54 55 – 64

65 – 74 75+
How long have you lived in the area? ……